



ASSOCIATION FOR IRANIAN STUDIES

انجمن ایران پژوهی

<http://associationforiranianstudies.org>

AIS Newsletter | Volume 42, Number 1 | April 2021

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

Dear AIS Members,

As I write these words, we have entered the second year of a global pandemic that has affected all of us in a myriad of ways. Many have been separated from loved ones suddenly and unexpectedly, many have lived in fear of illness or the illness of their families, many have been deeply and negatively impacted—financially, mentally, physically. This note from me to you though is a hopeful one for as Hafez said:

رسید مژده که ایام غم نخواهد ماند/چنان مانند چنین نیز نخواهد ماند

I was lucky enough to take the reins of our association from Prof. Cam Amin who led AIS with vision and humor under the most difficult of circumstances. Thanks to his efforts and that of our Treasurer, James Gustafson, our association has found itself in good financial shape. My goal is to use this stability to support initiatives that will buoy our community of scholars, particularly our graduate students and early career colleagues who have been conducting research and producing scholarship in extraordinary circumstances including a lack of access to archives and field sites. To this end, with Council's support, we have begun a series of webinars called Presidential Sessions, the goal of which is to provide information about professionalization in Iranian Studies and to also highlight various aspects of the state of our field. Our first session in March 2021, conceived and organized by our Student Council members, focused on publishing in Iranian Studies and was a great success, paving the way for more similar events in the coming months. I have also convened a mentorship task force comprised of both junior and senior scholars to find ways to pool our association's resources and link our global community to each other. Our hope is to further cement a model of scholarship in Iranian Studies that is collaborative and supportive.

The current year has also seen the fruition of a number of developments that had begun under my predecessor, including, but not limited to, the creation of the AIS Committee for Academic Freedom with the goal of safeguarding the freedom of inquiry and expression for our members as well as other scholars in the field of Iranian studies, and the start of Prof. Sussan Siavoshi's term as Editor-in-Chief of our flagship journal *Iranian Studies*. On behalf of us all, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Prof. Ali Gheissari for his



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PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS CONT'D

incomparable leadership of the journal over the past several years, extend our community's best wishes to Prof. Siavoshi, and express our gratitude to colleagues who serve the Iranian Studies community in a vast number of ways, often without any recognition or compensation.

I would like to end by emphasizing two important ways in which we can all get involved in our association: renewal of membership, and, as importantly, voting. Someone once said that decisions are made by those who show up and these two pathways are the most important ways in which you can be part of the decisions that will be made on behalf of us all. Be it elections for Council or President, or referendums on various types of initiatives required by our bylaws, by being a member and by voting, you can help make this association a positive force in your own and others' intellectual world. I implore all of you to do so when the time comes.

Best Wishes,

Naghmeh Sohrabi
President, Association for Iranian Studies

President's Announcement of 11 February 2021

Dear AIS Members,

Greetings and I hope you and your loved ones are well and in health during these difficult times.

Since taking over in December 2020 as president of our association, I have been working with our Council to create a number of new programs aimed at further supporting our members, in addition to bringing to fruition a series of initiatives that were set in motion during the tenure of previous president, Prof. Camron Amin. I will be informing you of these exciting programs and initiatives in the coming weeks.

In the meantime, I am pleased to announce that the AIS Committee for Academic Freedom has already been formed and begun its important work. As you know from Prof. Amin's announcement on June 1, 2020, AIS-CAF was created through the recommendations of the Academic

Freedom Task Force, which based its recommendations on a survey of our membership along with a study of how other academic societies undertake this work. These recommendations were reviewed and approved by Council in its May 2020 quarterly meeting.

The new AIS-CAF website is housed on our website under Resources and can be directly accessed here:

<https://associationforiranianstudies.org/about-ais-caf>

AIS-CAF draws its mandate from Council-approved bylaws and guidelines, which will also be made available on the website. As a sign of Council support for this important work, we have also approved a budget for AIS-CAF to allow for independent investigations of cases if and when needed. Additionally, Council unanimously voted to keep the identities of AIS-CAF members known only to AIS Council. This move was necessary in order to ensure the safety of AIS-CAF members considering current political sensitivities. Presently, the CAF committee consists of dedicated, thoughtful, and well informed AIS members. Their knowledge of Iranian Studies and its unique set of challenges make them extremely qualified to serve. Any concerned party can contact the committee to bring cases to their attention via the link provided on the website.

On behalf of the Council, I would like to thank our members who requested the creation of CAF at our general meeting in November 2019 and the Academic Freedom Task Force who worked hard to create a detailed set of bylaws and guidelines for it. Our deepest gratitude goes to the members of AIS-CAF whose willingness to serve without recognition and accolades is a reflection of their commitment to academic freedom for everyone in our community and beyond.

Naghmeh Sohrabi
President, Association for Iranian Studies

The AIS Committee for Academic Freedom has issued letters and statements on behalf of Fariba Adelkhah, Touraj Amini, and the state of academic freedom in Iran as it applies particularly to Haleh Lajevardi.

The letters can be accessed at:

<https://associationforiranianstudies.org/about-ais-caf/ais-caf-letters>
and <https://associationforiranianstudies.org/about-ais-caf/ais-caf-statements>

JOURNAL NEWS

IRANIAN STUDIES | Volume 53, Numbers 5-6, September–December 2020

EDITORIAL NOTE (ALI GHEISSARI)

ARTICLES

- YOONES DEHGHANI FARSANI AND KIANOOSH REZANIA: Ibn al-Malāhimi on Zoroastrianism
- LOUISE MARLOW: Translation of the Words of 'Ali b. Abi Tālib in Early Fourteenth-Century Iran: A Local Bilingual Network
- JAMES WHITE: On the Road: The Life and Verse of Mir Zeyn al-Din 'Eshq, a Forgotten Eighteenth-Century Poet
- WENDY DESOUZA: Race, Slavery and Domesticity in Late Qajar Chronicles
- NIMROD ZAGAGI: An Oasis of Radicalism: The Labor Movement in Abadan in the 1940s
- GOULIA GHARDASHKHANI: Narrative Geometry in 'Ali Reza Gholami's *Divar* (The Wall): New Developments in Iranian War Literature
- FATEMEH SHAMS: Dialogues with the Dead: Necropoetics of Zahra's Paradise
- AARÓN RODRÍGUEZ SERRANO: Structures in Crisis: A Narrative Approach to Asghar Farhadi's Films
- THIERRY COVILLE: The Family Business in Iran since the Islamic Revolution as a Mode of Coordination
- SIMON THEOBALD: "We Deserve Better": Ideologies of Deservingness and Status in the Interpretation of Chinese Goods in an Iranian Bazaar

PRIMARY SOURCES, ARCHIVAL NOTES

- ANDRÁS BARATI: An Early Decree of Nādir Shāh Concerning the *vaqf* of Ardabil

REVIEW ESSAYS

- SAGHI GAZERANI: Patricia Crone, Hanna Siurua (ed.), *The Iranian Reception of Islam: The Non-Traditionalist Strands*
- NEGUIN YAVARI: Catherine Mayeur-Jaouen (ed.), *Adab and Modernity: A "Civilising Process"? (Sixteenth–Twenty-First Century)*

REVIEWS

- JOHN O. HYLAND: Matt Waters, *Ctesias' Persica and Its Near Eastern Context*
- CHRISTOPHER TUPLIN: John O. Hyland, *Persian Interventions: The Achaemenid Empire, Athens and Sparta, 450–386 BCE*
- SHEILA BLAIR: Mohamad Reza Ghiasian, Lives of the Prophets: *The Illustrations to Hafiz-i Abrū's "Assembly of Chronicles"*
- RASOUL NAMAZI: Ali Gheissari, John Walbridge, and Ahmed Alwishah (eds), *Illuminationist Texts and Textual Studies: Essays in Memory of Hossein Ziai*

- PALMIRA BRUMMETT: Giovanni-Tomasso Minadoi, Translation (in 1595) by Abraham Hartwell, *The War between the Turks and the Persians: Conflict and Religion in the Safavid and Ottoman Worlds*
- H. E. CHEHABI: Morgane Humbert, *Diplomatique nippo-iranienne: Enjeu énergétique et interférences américaines: Concilier l'inconciliable*
- ROMAN SIEBERTZ: Younes Jalali, Taghi Erani, *a Polymath in Interwar Berlin: Fundamental Science, Psychology, Orientalism, and Political Philosophy*
- NAVID DARVISHZADEH: Nafiseh Sharifi, *Female Bodies and Sexuality in Iran and the Search for Defiance*
- CLAUDIA YAGHOORI: Azadeh Fatehrad, *The Poetics and Politics of the Veil in Iran: An Archival and Photographic Adventure*
- MARIE OSTBY: Mehraneh Ebrahimi, *Women, Art, and Literature in the Iranian Diaspora*
- LARS MÜLLER: Fatemeh Kamali-Chirani, *Does Intercultural Dialogue Matter? The Role of Intercultural Dialogue in the Foreign Cultural Policy of Iran and Germany*

IN MEMORIAM

- JALEH AMOUZEGAR: Badr al-Zamān Qarib (b. Tehran, 23 August 1929, d. Tehran, 28 July 2020): Author and Translator, Linguist, Expert in Soghdian, Iranologist
- ROBERT HILLENBRAND: Abdullah Ghouchani (b. Baghdad, 11 August 1948, d. Tehran, 7 August 2020): Epigrapher, Expert in Medieval Arabic and Persian Inscriptions
- ALI GHEISSARI: Reza Banakar (b. Shiraz, 1959–d. Lund, 28 August 2020): Professor of Legal Sociology and Scholar of the Iranian Legal Culture

RECENT TITLES IN IRANIAN STUDIES

- Books in Persian and Arabic
- Titles in European Languages

Presently *Iranian Studies* has a strong reserve of material on its online edition that were processed by the outgoing editorial office. These materials consist of regular articles, review essays and book reviews that will appear in the forthcoming issues of the journal's print edition in 2021. A list of these materials and a Comprehensive Table of Contents of Iranian Studies for Volumes 50, 51, 52, 53 (2017–2020) is available on the Journal's website.

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00210862.2020.1840260>

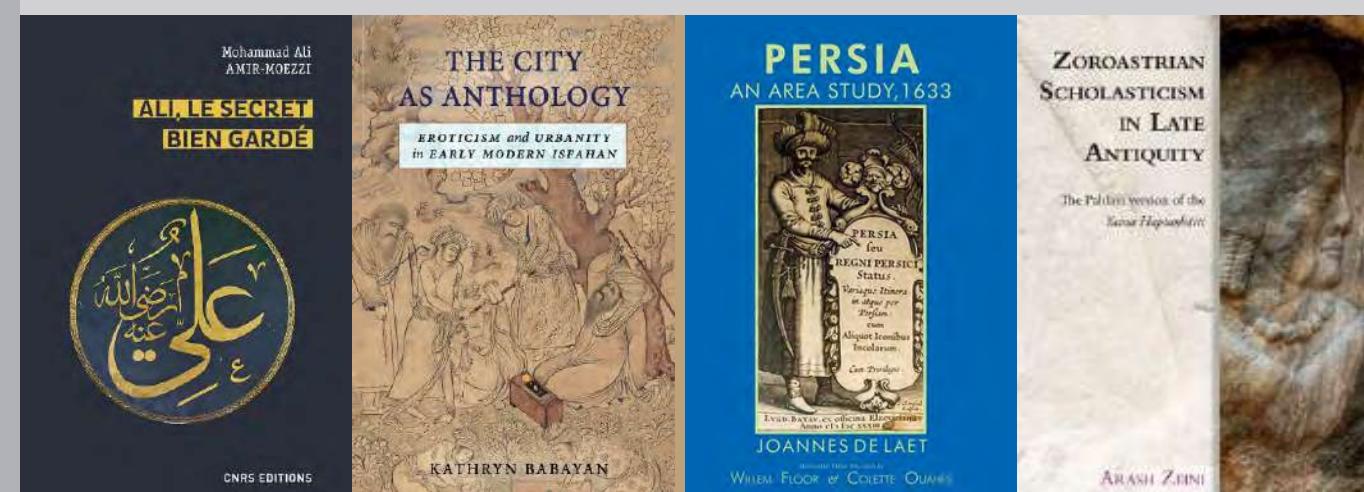
https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/suppl/10.1080/00210862.2020.1840260/suppl_file/cist_a_1840260_sm2252.pdf



MEMBER NEWS

- **Mohammad Ali Amir-Moezzi**'s book *La Preuve de Dieu. La mystique shi'ite à travers l'œuvre de Kulaynî (IXe-Xe siècle)* (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 2018) has received the 2019 Bernheim Prize of the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres. His multi-volume work, *Le Coran des historiens* (4 vols.) (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 2018), co-edited with **Guillaume Dye**, is a winner of the 2019 Grand Prix du meilleur livre des Rendez-vous de l'Histoire de l'Institut du Monde Arabe. The four volumes consist of Vol. 1: Etudes sur le contexte et la genèse du texte coranique, 1014 p.; Vol. 2a: Commentaire et analyse du texte coranique. Sourates 1-26, 966 p; Vol. 2b: Commentaire et analyse du texte coranique. Sourates 27-114, pp. 967-2386; and Vol. 3: Bibliographie des études sur le Coran, 385 p. His new book *Ali, le secret bien gardé. Figures du premier Maître en spiritualité shi'ite*, has been published by CNRS Editions (Paris) in 2020.
- **Kathryn Babayan** has published *The City as Anthology. Eroticism and Urbanity in Early Modern Isfahan* with Stanford University Press, 2021.
- **Willem Floor** has published the books *The Beginnings of Modern Medicine in Iran* (MAGE, 2020) and *The History of Hospitals in Iran 550-1950* (MAGE, 2020). Floor has also published the following book chapters and articles: "The Early Life of Shah Esma'il in Contemporary Published Venetian Sources," *Tarikhnameh-ye Iran ba'd az Islam* 11/23, 1399/2020, pp. 69-100; "The Earliest Account of the Battle of Chalderan?," *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 170/2, pp. 371-94; "From Quasi-Vegetarians to Quasi-Carnivores: The changing diet of the Iranians," *Iranian Studies*, published online October 2020; "Jan Lucassen Hasselt: a Dutch painter in Isfahan" (with Foroughi Sajadi), *Iranian Studies*, published online October 2020; "Commercial Relations between Safavid Persia and Western-Europe," in Charles Melville (ed.), *Safavid Persia in the Age of Empires. The Idea of Iran*, vol. 10. (London: IB Tauris, 2021), pp. 267-89; and Joannes de Laet, *Persia seu regni Persici status*, translated from Latin as *Persia, an area study 1633* by Willem Floor & Colette Ouahes (MAGE, 2021), 181 pages, 6 illustr.
- Based on field research in Shiraz and Aliabad, **Mary Elaine Hegland** has published the article "Aging and the Elderly: Diminishing Family Care Systems and Need for Alternatives," in *The Routledge Handbook of Islam and Gender*, Ed., Justine Howe. New York: Routledge, 2021, pp. 358-374.
- **Mary Elaine Hegland** and **Maryam Karimi** have published "Child Marriages and Their Results: Insights from Iranian Women's Stories," in *Temporary and Child Marriages in Iran and Afghanistan: Historical Perspectives and Contemporary Issues*, Ed., S. Behnaz Hosseini, Singapore: Springer Nature Singapore Pte Ltd., 2021, pp. 67-86.

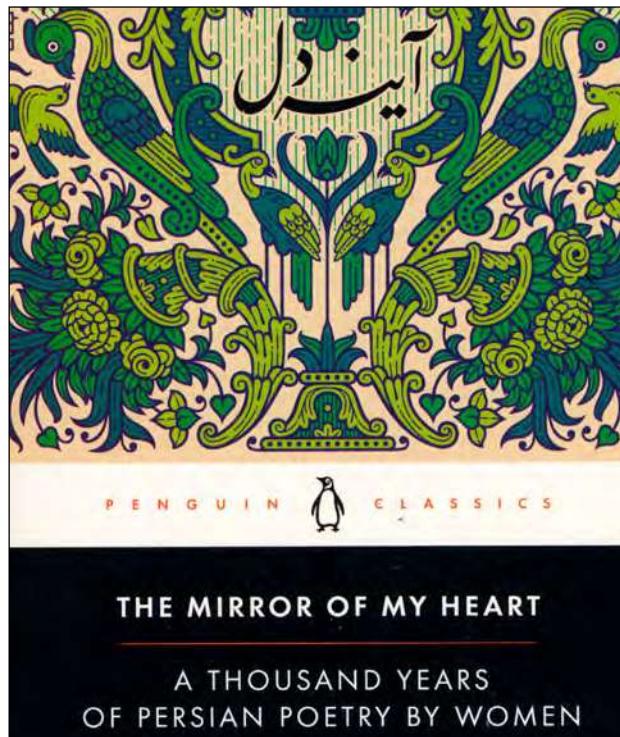
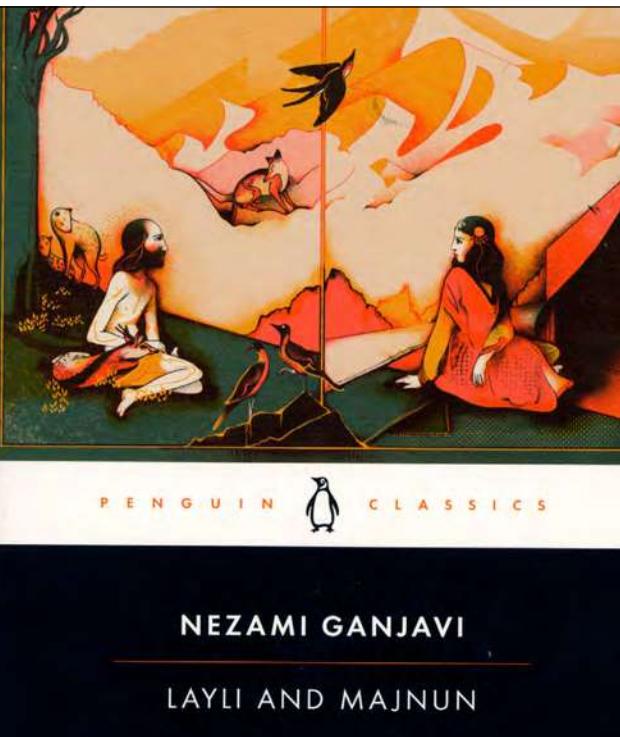
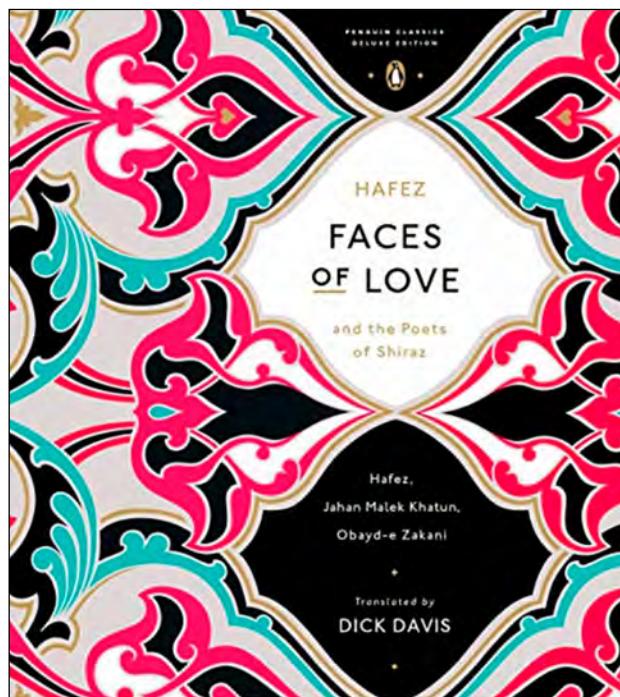
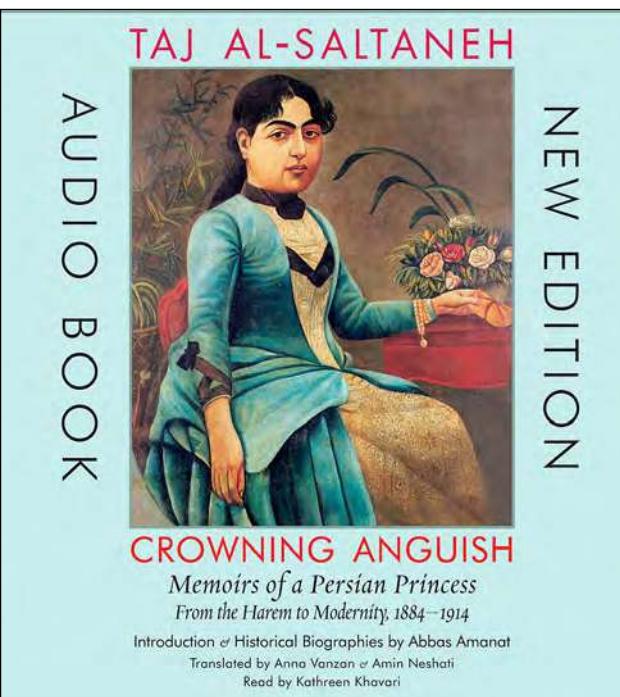
- **Domenico Ingenito** has published the book *Beholding Beauty: Sa'di of Shiraz and the Aesthetics of Desire in Medieval Persian Poetry* with Brill Publishers, December 2020.
- **Alexander Jabbari** and **Tiffany Yun-Chu Tsai**'s article "Sinicizing Islam: Translating the Gulistan of Sa'di in Modern China," has been published in *The International Journal of Islam in Asia*, Vol. 1(1), 2020, pp. 6-26.
- **Vera Moreen**'s article "Echoes of the Battle of Čälderān: The Account of the Jewish Chronicler Elijah Capsali (c. 1490-c.1555)" has been published by *Studia Iranica* 48 (2019), pp. 195-234.
- **Ali Paya** announces the publication of two books: *Science, Society and Development: Essays on the Public Understanding of Science* ('Ilm, Jāme' va Tuse'eh: Maqālātī dar bāb-e Tarvij-e 'Ilm dar Hītēh-ye 'Umumī), Tehran, National Institute for Science Policy, 2021; and *Religious Science, Indigenous Science, and Islamic Science: Thinking the Impossible or Thinking Ahead of Time: An Anthology of Ideological Projects of Knowledge Production*, ('Ilm-e Dinī, 'Ilm-e Bumī, va 'Ilm-e Eslāmī: Mahāl Andishī yā Dür Andishī- Majmu'e Maqālātī dar bār-e-ye Poruzhe-hāy-e Eideologic-e Tarvij-e 'Ilm dar; be hamrāh-e Arzyābi-ye Naqādāneh Didgāh-e Du Şāheb Nazar-e Iranī, Tehran: University Press Centre, 2021.
- **Majid Roshangar**'s book *Iran's Policy in the Persian Gulf: 1968-1975* has been published by Xlibris, 2021.
- **Akbar E. Torbat** has published the articles "Problems of Economic Liberalization in Iran," in *Topics in Middle Eastern and African Economies*, Vol. 22, Issue No. 1, May 2020; and "Parliamentary Election in Iran," *Researchgate*, March 2020.
- **Arash Zeini**'s book *Zoroastrian Scholasticism in Late Antiquity. The Pahlavi version of the Yasna Haptanhāiti* has been published by Edinburgh University Press, 2020.



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DISSERTATION NEWS

The Representation of Women in Premodern Persian Epic Romance Poetry: A Study of Ferdowsi's *Šāhnāme*, Gorgāni's *Vis o Rāmin*, and Nezāmi's *Kosrow o Širin*

by Sahba Shayani, Ph.D. dissertation deposited at the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures, University of California, Los Angeles, September 2020

This dissertation examines the representation of women in premodern Persian epic romance poetry by focusing on three key texts of the genre: Ferdowsi's *Šāhnāme* (c. 1010 CE), Nezāmi's *Kosrow o Širin* (1191 CE), and Gorgāni's *Vis o Rāmin* (1050–1055 CE). It identifies four female characters from the earlier portion of the *Šāhnāme*—Rudābe, Tahmine, Sudābe, and Manīže—and isolates two specific characteristics for each of these women. These characteristics are then traced in the characters of Širin and Vis: the main female protagonists of Nezāmi and Gorgāni's works. In doing so, this dissertation demonstrates the interlinked nature of these characters throughout the three different texts. This work also engages with the subject of ethnicity. The texts in question seem to suggest that women who hail from the peripheries of the Iranian empire may exercise greater agency, in comparison to their counterparts from the heartland, so long as it is to the benefit of the Iranian crown. Once these women have played their role to the benefit of the monarchy, however, they are expected to relinquish their agency and to leave the spotlight; otherwise, they will be severely punished. In stark opposition to this notion stands the character of Vis who, as an Iranian noblewoman from the heartland, defies the patriarchal boundaries set upon her and her kind. She does so by exercising her sexuality as an act of political agency, while remaining the most morally stable character in the poem. In her fiction-world, Vis is ultimately rewarded for her courage and audacity. In the literary milieu, however, she is severely punished for it by becoming a sign of ill repute. It is thus, this dissertation posits, that she and her tale appear to dissipate into the shadows, while the story and character of Širin—who predominantly wields her agency through abstinence—become renowned and “worthy” of emulation.

Iranian Studies vol. 53 (nos. 05-06), September-December 2020, has been published and is posted on the publisher's website:

<https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/cist20/53/5-6?nav=tocList>

It is available to the AIS membership on the AIS website and via the Journal's archive:

<https://associationforiranianstudies.org/>

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DISSTERTATION NEWS CONT'D

Recipients of the 2020 Best Ph.D. Dissertations Award by the Foundation for Iranian Studies

The Foundation for Iranian Studies is pleased to announce that the Committee on Selection of the Best Ph.D. Dissertation of the Year on a Topic of Iranian Studies of the Foundation for Iranian Studies has chosen **Dr. Khalil Andani's** dissertation "Revelation in Islam: Qur'anic, Sunni, and Shi'i Ismaili Perspectives," submitted to the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at Harvard University, as the recipient of the Foundation's annual Ph.D. dissertation award for the academic year 2019-2020. In making its decision, the Committee, following the criteria established by the Foundation's Board of Directors, noted that Khalil Andani has made an exceptional contribution to the field of Iranian and Middle Eastern Studies by, among other achievements, "stating clearly the study's problematic... constructing an adequate and efficient theoretical framework... developing and using successfully a rigorous methodology to bring together a significant array of primary and secondary sources... securing critical information by judiciously examining different but relevant opinions about his subject matter, i.e., meanings, implications, and the nature of the Qur'an revealed to Prophet Muhammad as divine speech, divine writing, divine inspiration, revelatory recitation, or scripture... adopting an innovative multidisciplinary approach to derive intellectually reasonable and historically modifiable understanding of different Qur'anic Revelation models... incorporating various theological and hermeneutical arguments to define the meaning, nature and effect of Revelatory Principle, Revelatory Process, and Revelatory Product ... demonstrating originality in approach, balance in reaching conclusions, adeptness in conjoining thought, literature, and history to support the dissertation's findings.... excellent organization of the work."

The Committee also cited **Zahra Nasiri Moghaddam's** dissertation "Les pionniers de l'enseignement du français à l'École Polytechnique (Dâr ol-Fonun) de Téhéran au XIXe siècle: Jules Richard, Mozayyen od-Dowle et Yusof Richard" submitted to École doctoral des Humanités, Université de Strasbourg, with honorable mention for superior scholarship, originality, clarity, and significant contribution to the field of Iranian Studies.

Gholam Reza Afkhami

Chair, Ph.D. Dissertation Awards Committee
Foundation for Iranian Studies

MODERN IRAN

A HISTORY IN DOCUMENTS

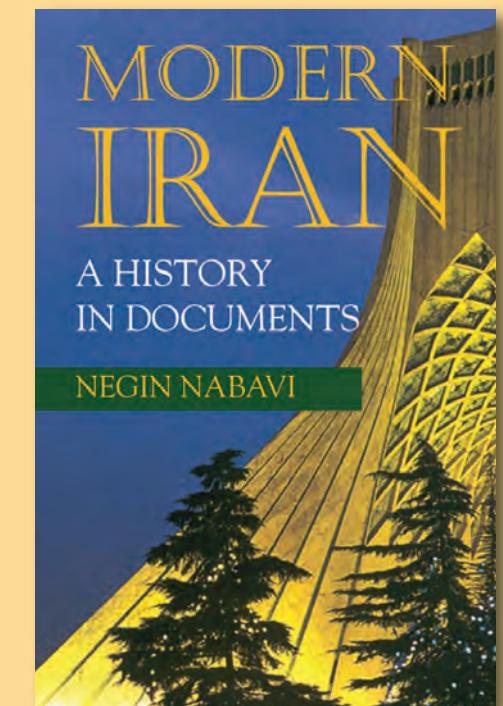
Edited, translated, and introduced by Negin Nabavi

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Also in
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Covering the period from the early nineteenth century to the present day, *Modern Iran: A History in Documents* brings together primary sources in translation that shed light on the political, social, cultural, and intellectual history of modern Iran. This book comprises a wide variety of documents from newspapers, periodicals, diaries, memoirs, letters, speeches, and essays, all of which have been translated from the Persian for the first time. It captures the momentous changes that society has undergone, encompassing not only political events and developments, but also ideas, perceptions, and mindsets. In addition to well-known texts from diplomatic conventions, the book features passages by lesser-known men and women who describe the reception of and response to major developments across the social strata. The book is divided into ten chapters, with the final one bringing together documents that offer insights into recent events; these documents highlight contrasting viewpoints expressed in the Iranian press regarding the nuclear agreement reached in 2015 between Iran and six world powers.

Negin Nabavi, associate professor at Montclair State University, is the author of *Intellectuals and the State in Iran: Politics, Discourse, and the Dilemma of Authenticity* and *Iran: From Theocracy to the Green Movement*.

The book is divided into ten chapters, with the last one bringing together documents that offer insights into recent events.



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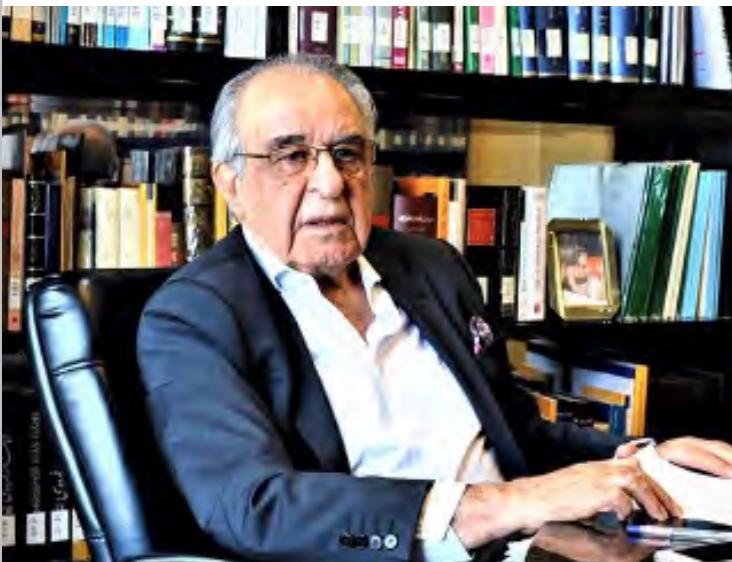
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AWARD NEWS

French government bestows *Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres* on Dariush Borbor



The French government has conferred the Knighthood of the Order of Arts and Letters (**Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres**) on Dariush Borbor, the eminent architect, city planner and Iranologist. This distinction is bestowed on persons who have rendered outstanding contribution in their field of work at the national and international level.

Dariush Borbor was educated in Britain and Switzerland and has been widely referred to as the “father of modern urban planning in Iran”.

Borbor’s architectural style is often defined by elusive curves and unconventional spaces, that even after the passage of more than half a century preserve their originality, beauty and sensuality. Shahabuddin Tasdighi wrote of Borbor’s style: “One of the distinguishing aspects of his designs compared to other great architects of the 20th century is his use of repetitive geometrical modules (such as circles or octagons) in creating a different plan and space. This technique of repetition distinguishes his works and goes beyond a simple formalism.” The renowned Swiss architectural critic Anthony Kraft has described Borbor as “one of the pioneers of modern architecture in the twentieth century”.



Arjomand House and Clinic, Kerman (1961), sixty years ago, Borbor's first architectural design in Iran

As a youngster, Borbor coincidentally met Dariush Shayegan, the later eminent philosopher and writer who also studied in Geneva, on an air trip to Tehran, and a seventy-year friendship developed between the two. Other friends and contemporaries who studied in Switzerland and became prominent in their own right, included Mohammad Ali Jamalzadeh, Ehsan Naraghi, Akbar Etemad, Jalal Sattari and Davoud Rashidi.

Apart from being a distinguished personality in architecture and urban planning, Dariush Borbor is well-known in the fields of environment, painting, sculpture and writing. As a researcher, he has lectured extensively at well-known universities worldwide and his academic writings in English, French, and Persian have been included in the *Encyclopedia of Urban Planning*, the *Encyclopaedia Iranica* and the *Great Islamic Encyclopaedia*.

Borbor has been elected to several professional associations including the Swiss Society of Engineers and Architects (1961), the Royal Town Planning Institute of Great Britain (1972), the Board of the Iranian Society of Architects (1974), the Board of the Syndicate of Iranian Consulting Architects (1975), and the French Society of Urbanists (1982).

Borbor has been the recipient of other notable awards, including the Gold Mercury International Award and he was included among the 50 Most Eminent Architects in the World at the Belgrade International Architectural Forum.



Mashhad Commercial Center (1976), designed by Borbor

OBITUARY

Marvin Zonis (1936-2020)

Marvin Zonis, 84, widely admired and loved Professor Emeritus of Business Administration at the University of Chicago Booth School of Business, died on Sunday, November 15, 2020 after a brief illness.

Professor Zonis was born and raised in Boston. He was educated at Yale University, Harvard Business School, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (where he received a Ph.D. in Political Science), and the Chicago Psychoanalytic Institute.

Zonis' career at the University of Chicago spanned over fifty years; he was devoted to the institution and its students. His research and expertise were wide-ranging and cross-disciplinary. He began his career as a scholar of Iranian politics and became a leading authority on the Middle East more broadly. Over the course of five decades, he worked in the Department of Political Science, the Center for Middle Eastern Studies, and the Committee on Human Development before joining the Booth School of Business in 1987. At Booth he developed some of the School's most popular courses, on topics including leadership, international political economy, political risk, and emerging economies. He was the first at Booth to teach a course on the effects of digital technologies on global business.

Zonis was at heart a teacher, who taught with charisma, warmth, wisdom, and humor. As a staunch advocate of the University of Chicago's ethos of teaching students how to think, he taught undergraduate core classes in the social sciences for many years. He was committed to preparing students to be better citizens and contributors to their home countries and to the world. A mentor and friend to generations of students, he provided guidance, support, and inspiration as they pursued their careers and life goals all over the globe in academia and the corporate and financial worlds. He found immense gratification in their successes.

Professor Zonis received several accolades for his teaching, including the Quantrell Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching, and the Norman Maclean Faculty Award for outstanding contributions to teaching and to the student experience at the University of Chicago.

The Marvin Zonis International Scholarship Fund, awarded each year to an exceptional prospective Booth student from an emerging economy, was created in his honor by a group of his former students. He and his wife Lucy Salenger were deeply involved in the experiences of scholarship recipients when they came to Chicago.

Throughout his career, Zonis wrote extensively on topics including Middle Eastern politics, US foreign policy, and globalization. He often analyzed political events and leaders through the lens of psychoanalytic theory. His articles have been widely published, including in the *Financial Times*, *The New York Times*, and the *International Herald Tribune*. His books include *The Political Elite of Iran*, *Majestic Failure: The Fall of the Shah*, *Risk Rules: How Local Politics Threaten the Global Economy* (co-author), and *The Kimchi Matters: Global Business and Local Politics in a Crisis Driven World* (co-author). Zonis served on multiple boards, including those of the Chicago Psychoanalytic Institute, CNA Financial, and City Elementary, a Chicago school for diverse learners.

During the Iranian hostage crisis of 1979 ABC's Nightline called on Professor Zonis, then one of the few American experts on Iran, to explain events as they unfolded. He was a charismatic presence on camera, and skilled at clearly interpreting complex events in unfamiliar regions for general audiences. He became a frequent media commentator on international affairs. This led to consulting for corporations, including Fidelity Investments, KPMG, and Accenture.

While conducting research for his Ph.D. dissertation in the early 1960s, Zonis spent two years living in Tehran. To his astonishment he was introduced there to another Mr. Zonis, a cousin who had fled Romania and lost his family to the Nazis. He developed a deep friendship with the Iranian Zonis family, and ultimately helped the younger generation to immigrate to Chicago. As the first-generation American son of immigrants who fled persecution in Russia himself, the opportunity to help his cousins and their children to build rich lives in the United States was very meaningful to him. Sadly, Zonis was never able to return to Iran after the Revolution of 1979 as he had been officially declared an "enemy of the people."

In addition to his wife Lucy Salenger, Professor Zonis is survived by daughters Brix Smith Start of London, Nadia Zonis of New York City, and Leah Zonis Harp of Minneapolis, sons-in-law Philip Start and Jason Harp, and grandsons Lev and Hank Harp. His loss will be felt by dear friends, family, and former students in Chicago and around the world.

Contributions can be made to the Marvin Zonis International Scholarship Fund via this link <https://bit.ly/MarvinZonisScholarship>, or by calling 773-702-7747.

Contributions can also be sent to The University of Chicago, 5235 S. Harper Ct., 4th Fl., Chicago, IL 60615. Checks should be made out to the University of Chicago with an indication that they are for the Marvin Zonis International Scholarship Fund.

Mohammad Reza Shajarian: Homage to a Master Vocalist

I died as mineral and a plant,
I died as plant and rose to animal,
I died as an animal and I was Man.
Why should I fear? When was I less by dying?

Jalalu'l-Din Rumi, "The Ascending Soul"
Selected Poems of Rumi (43)

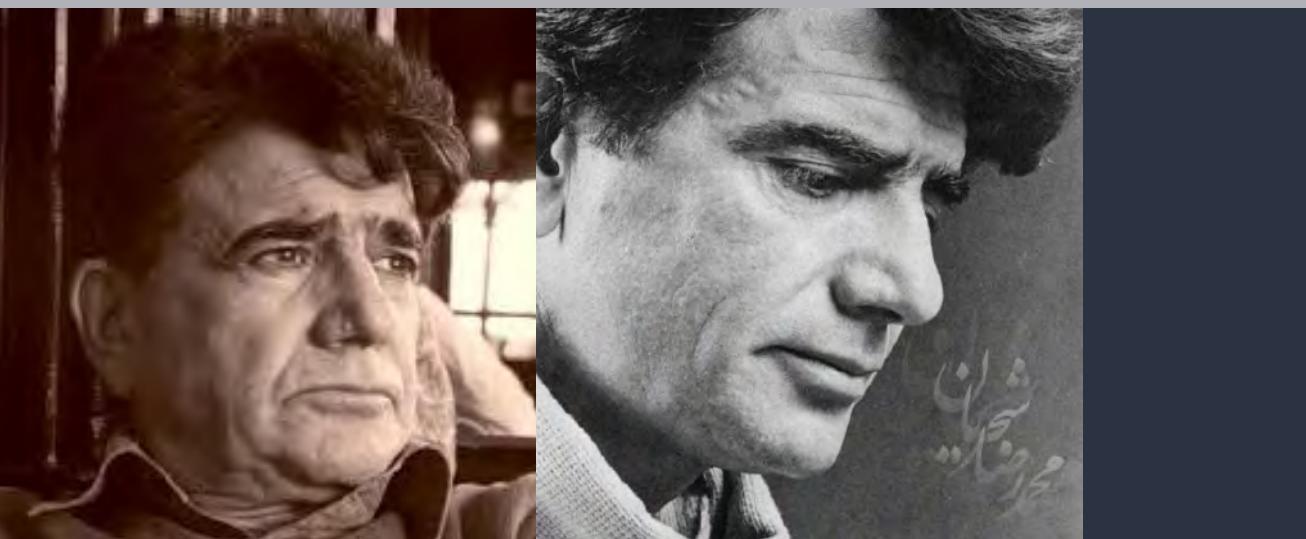
They go, and nothing succeeds them.
In the long distance they disappear,
and where they were there is only
vacancy, the distillation of loss.
In memoriam they walk to no destiny.
There is the burden of pilgrimage.

N. Scott Momaday, "The Pilgrims"
in The Death of Sitting Bear (159)

PART I

Ostād Mohammad Reza Shajarian (1940 – 2020) recently left us for the hereafter. He was a distinguished vocalist of Persian music, musicologist, vocal instructor, calligrapher, and designer of musical instruments. Born in the city of Mashhad in Khorāsān province, it was there that he started his vocation in 1959 as a singer with a style of his own, which owed much to his religious upbringing. He lived in the vicinity of the Shrine of Imam Reza, the eighth Shiite Imam.

Early in his career, Shajarian was impressed and moved by vocal performances of the distinguished singer Qamar-ol-Moluk Vaziri, one of the most celebrated and appreciated vocalists of early 20th century Persian music. As a singer of traditional songs and *āvāz*, she was a spellbinder in her time, singing on the stage for the first time in a public venue.



Following the desire to learn and to teach, to be a part of an inclusive community of musicians, Shajarian performed with numerous individuals and groups of musicians. He collaborated with sophisticated and lyrically animated *setār* player Ahmad Ebadi, and *tār* players such as Jalil Shahnaz, Mohammad Reza Lotfi. Later, he joined Parviz Meshkātiān and composers and *tār* players Majid Derakhshanian and Tahmoures Pournazeri – to mention a few of his many collaborators. Shajarian teamed up with still another younger generation of virtuoso instrumentalists, such as *tār* player and composer Hossein Alizādeh, *kamāncheh* and *setār* player Kayhan Kalhor, and composer and *tār* player Sohrab Pournāzeri.

It is significant and signifying that Shajarian never denied, resented, resisted, or impeded musical innovations – both in theory and practice. He wanted a coherent series of musical progressions in developing trends. His intelligence cleared the way for him to have a solid comprehension of these matters. It provided him with an admirable musical continuum in his mind.

PART II

That minstrel singing with full voice divine,
What lay was his? for 'mid the woven rope
Of song, he brought word from my Friend to me
Set to his melody.
Hafez: The Garden of Heaven (48)

Shajarian found that Persian modal music created a sensation of possessing color. He ascribed colors to the twelve modes of Persian modal systems and the sounds of various musical instruments. He had his own schema of synesthetic musical sounds for the phenomenon. I think of it as Shajarian, starting with the equivalent of musical algebra, moved on to the calculus of complex musical phrases and sounds. At this stage of his musical evolution, he could more easily explore the as-yet unlit hidden places in vocal and instrumental music and took us along with him.

I believe Shajarian's vocal performances carry in them a hint of the strong early influence of his childhood and growing up in the midst of a devout Persian Muslim family. One thinks of his listening to the hymnal five daily calls to prayer with their recitations of the Quran; various a cappella *rozehkhanī* presentations; and religious chants on celebrative or sorrowful occasions. They all communicate an uncanny sense of the union of the melodic and the divine. In short, the secular in its materiality and the sacred in its spirituality unfold side by side in religious incantations.

As an artist, Shajarian searched for creative ways so that everyone would appreciate, enjoy, and simultaneously emotionally and spiritually discover liberation in his vocal art. He was acutely aware that every listener would partake of his vocal performances differently, each in his or her own way. Each one would receive it according to the richness of their own culture of education, and poetry, in fact the arts as a whole. One might say Shajarian's finds a high place in Persian music, which heralds a democratic approach to music. It is as if he were saying all his life:

OBITUARY cont'd

relish my music according to the knowledge, passion, and creative desire and energy you bring to it. I offer it to you, but then it is up to you to make it your own in any way you choose. You are in a free zone of your mind and heart. You are at once rational, and emotional, sensual and spiritual. Interpret my music as it suits your needs. Approaching Shajarian's music in this way one might justifiably say it initiates embodying freedom of choice while acquiring aural pleasure, and *enlightenment*, as all truly great art always and everywhere does.

Some of Shajarian's enthusiasts were truly deeply bereft in his absence (*gheybat*). His final departure affirmed a sense of gloom arising from the perception of an inner loss as a more existential sense of the emptiness and purposelessness of human life in general (*bihoudegī*). This feeling is currently more acute because our world is in the grip of a fearsome coronavirus pandemic. A sense of ultimate futility of life becomes an unavoidable complement of the sensation of transitory nature of our being (*hasti*).

Those among us who could only listen to Shajarian's recorded vocal performances or see videos of his concerts and the interviews with him missed him just the same. They feel his absence now more forlornly. He had given us a vital living aural connection with inner experiences only his vocal rendition of Persian music made available to some of us. He provided us with a much-desired and needed musical bridge between the best of our inherited traditional Persian music and contemporary music. It opened up innovative potentials and possibilities in conception and applications of traditional music. Shajarian's performances steadily carried anticipatory intimations of coming musical novelties. I find them in songs such as "I Live on a Cloud" (*Khāneam Abrast*), "The Entranced Salute You" (*Rendāne Salāmat Mikonand*), and "Lovers" (*Delshodegān*).

No matter how depressing Shajarian's passing was and remains so, he has left us undeniably lasting traces of himself and his works. These traces take on an irrefutable importance of their own. His son Homayoun Shajarian, whose voice is persuasively suggestive of his father's vocal style, fortunately remains with us. He performed flawless duos with his father and is actively pressing on with his own solid musical career as a vocalist and instrumentalist.

There is also Shajarian's talented daughter, Mojgan Shajarian, who is an accomplished singer with a highly expressive and emotionally charged style of vocalization. As a singer, she possesses a presence entirely her own. So the Shajarians continue to be a musical family to reckon with for years to come. It would have pleased their father as paterfamilias no end. Then there are his numerous students!

Moreover, ample traces of Shajarian's lasting presence among us as a vocal artist, notable musician and musicologist abundantly surround us. For me, these traces as recordings, videos, interviews, and remembrances of him by family, friends, and colleagues make up for a mode of his *being* with us *virtually*.

Shajarian's alchemical transformations of the religious music of his early days and his subsequent mastery of Persian traditional modal music proved liberating. They became instrumental in his admirable openness to a number of diverse progressive possibilities and potentials. His awareness of the sacred as the presence of the divine gave his music a center of gravity. It all ended up as redemptive rather than restraining. Shajarian considered creative freedom and its attendant responsibilities and consequences as fundamental preconditions of progressive culture of music. To take creative freedom away would amount to suppression and exclusion of imagination and originality, a veritable loss of freedom. The denial might lead to our inability to transmute the lead of our everyday experiences into the gold of imaginative undertakings in the arts and sciences.

The esteem accorded to him by his prominent fellow musicians in particular and lovers of Persian music in general were palpably manifest after his passing. Yet beyond that, there also existed the image of him as a fellow human being of genuine dignity, good will, and irreproachable integrity.

His compatriots also missed him as a stalwart, calmly eloquent, and intelligent idealist. He was a man of principle. From afar, I genuinely respected in Shajarian his idealism. By idealism, I simply mean engaging freely in worthy acts just because one considers them morally right and proper. I think Shajarian acted as an idealist in this sense. He took responsibility for whatever he did or said because it struck him as the proper thing to do at a certain time, regardless of whether it would succeed or not.

Enraptured by Shajarian's gift of reaching the hidden, unknown, and often unknowable corners of our being, we salute him. He enlightened us by the powers of his vocal artistry, and his nobility of spirit. His sustained career as a vocalist with its beauty and communicative charm will speak to us unendingly about mysteries of our existence in generations to come.

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Erik Nakjavani

Professor Emeritus of Humanities, University of Pittsburgh

PROGRAM NEWS

University of Toronto launches Elahé Omidyar Mir-Djalali Institute of Iranian Studies

With a generous endowment of US\$6 million from Roshan Cultural Heritage Institute, the University of Toronto is launching the Elahé Omidyar Mir-Djalali Institute of Iranian Studies, which is named after the scholar and philanthropist who founded Roshan Cultural Heritage Institute in 2000. The new institute will focus primarily on research and outreach by leveraging the strong educational programming already in place across the University of Toronto, fostering advanced research in a collaborative community, and promoting intercultural dialogue.

Through its grant-making operations, Roshan Cultural Heritage Institute has provided millions of U.S. dollars in grants and endowments to establish or strengthen academic Persian programs at some of the most prestigious universities in the world.

With investments allocated over a multi-year period, the generous endowment from Roshan Cultural Heritage Institute will significantly expand the University's prestigious Iranian Studies program in several ways:

- Providing substantial support for a world-leading scholar who will serve as the Elahé Omidyar Mir-Djalali Institute's director
- Launching a regular lecture series and international conference to facilitate exchanges and discussions for the academic community
- Enhancing the graduate experience by awarding annually up to two Dissertation Completion Fellowships to top doctoral students in Iranian-related studies; and at least two Graduate Scholarships to pursue Persian language training abroad, participate in conferences or conduct research in the field
- Establishing a two-year Post-doctoral Fellowship to enable recently graduated PhDs to deepen their expertise in Iranian Studies and further their own research at the University
- Launching the Scholar Award program for tenure-track University of Toronto faculty members in Iranian studies to assist them in compiling successful tenure files
- Engaging the public and bringing focus to the richness of the Iranian culture by hosting annual cultural programs celebrating Persian holidays

"The Elahé Omidyar Mir-Djalali Institute of Iranian Studies is a tremendously exciting initiative," said Melanie Woodin, dean of the Faculty of Arts & Science at University of Toronto. "This wonderful gift offers new opportunities to build on our dynamic Iranian Studies program, to attract groundbreaking new scholars, to add to University of Toronto Libraries' extraordinary holdings in Persian literature, to diversify our interdisciplinary collaborations and to share our remarkable work with the global community. We envision nothing less than the chance to fundamentally transform the field."

The Elahé Omidyar Mir-Djalali Institute's mandate to foster collaboration and cultural appreciation will be enhanced by its location at 90 Queen's Park, the new cultural and academic hub currently under construction at the University. The state-of-the-art research and teaching facility, nestled between two highly respected museums, includes a 250-seat event space and an inviting garden plaza steps from the subway. Here, University of Toronto scholars — more than 18 leaders in the field of Iranian Studies — will work alongside those from the School of Cities, the Faculty of Music, the Institute of Islamic Studies and the departments of History and Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations. They will also have opportunities to connect with University of Toronto's outstanding network of researchers, across three campuses, and collaborate with Toronto's lively and growing Iranian community in the heart of one of the world's most diverse cities.



Dr. Elahé Omidyar Mir-Djalali founded Roshan Cultural Heritage Institute in 2000 to support the study of Persian civilization, from antiquity to today.

Photo credit: Gunner Omidyar.



Iranian Studies Webinar Series: Cinema and Women Poets

ZOOM REGISTRATION

<https://uoft.me/IranianStudies>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting. Registering once will give you access to the remaining talks in the series.

January 15, 2021

4:00 - 6:00 pm EST

January 22, 2021

4:00 - 6:00 pm EST

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4:00 - 6:00 pm EST

February 12, 2021

4:00 - 6:00 pm EST

February 19, 2021

4:00 - 6:00 pm EST

February 26, 2021

4:00 - 6:00 pm EST

March 5, 2021

4:00 - 6:00 pm EST

March 12, 2021

4:00 - 6:00 pm EST

March 19, 2021

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April 9, 2021

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April 16, 2021

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April 23, 2021

4:00 - 6:00 pm EST

April 30, 2021

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May 14, 2021

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May 21, 2021

4:00 - 6:00 pm EST

May 28, 2021

4:00 - 6:00 pm EST

June 4, 2021

4:00 - 6:00 pm EST

June 11, 2021

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For further information please contact:
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Azita Taleghani <azita.taleghani@utoronto.ca>, or
Arshavez Mozaferi <a.mozaferi@utoronto.ca>

A HISTORY OF IRANIAN WOMEN'S POETRY (IN PERSIAN)

Rohangiz Karachi, Humanities and Cultural Studies Institute, Tehran

THE CITY IN FILM: IMAGINING POST-WWII IRAN IN FILM-FARS! POPULAR CINEMA

Golbarg Rekabtalaei, Seton Hall University

THE INTERNATIONAL RECEPTION OF IRANIAN CINEMA, 2000-2013

Anne Demy-Geroe, Griffith University

FORUGH FARROKHZAD, MODERNITY AND MADNESS

Leila Rahimi Bahmany, Goethe University Frankfurt am Main

BANIETEMAD'S SOCIAL REALISM: A CLOSE LOOK AT HER DOCUMENTARY FILMS

Maryam Ghorbancharimi, Lancaster University

SHAME, STIGMA AND SIN: FROM TAHIRIH, TO FORUGH, TO US

Sholeh Wolpé, University of California, Irvine

PRECARITY AND POSSIBILITY: THE LABOR OF UNDERGROUND VIDEO DEALERS IN IRAN

Blake Atwood, American University of Beirut

SONIA BALASSANIAN: WRITING THE IMPOSSIBLE

Claudia Yaghoobi, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

PIONEER FEMALE DIRECTORS, WRITERS AND PRODUCERS IN IRANIAN CINEMA

Khatereh Shaibani, York University

WOMEN DEPICTING FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT IN IRANIAN CINEMA

Nacim Pak-Shiraz, University of Edinburgh

WOMEN POETS: GENDERED PERSONHOOD AND DISPLACEMENT

Fatemeh Shams Esmaeili, University of Pennsylvania

FROM GOLDEN CITY TO FELESTIN: THE ONOMASTICS OF CINEMA HALLS IN TEHRAN

Behrooz Mahmoodi-Bakhtiari, University of Tehran

DOCUMENTING A TRADITION: ANTHOLOGIES OF PERSIAN(ATE) POETRY BY WOMEN

Sunil Sharma, Boston University

ALLEGORY AND ALLEGORESIS IN IRANIAN CINEMA

Michelle Langford, University of New South Wales, Australia

THE UNSUNG POETRY OF KURDISH WOMEN

Farangis Ghaderi, University of Exeter

IRANIAN CINEMA AND INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVALS: A CROSSROADS BETWEEN ARTS AND POLITICS

Amir Ganjavi, McMaster University

CONTEXT AND CONCEPT: EARLY 20TH CENTURY WOMEN POETS

Rivanne Sandler, University of Toronto

MALE-FEMALE RELATIONSHIPS IN POST-REVOLUTIONARY IRAN

Assal Bagheri, Université de Cergy-Pontoise

EARLY QAJAR WOMEN POETS AND THEIR ENGAGEMENT WITH THE BAZGASHT-I ADABI

Dominic Brookshaw, Oxford University

PROGRAM NEWS CONT'D

Persian Studies at the University of Toronto

The Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations department at the University of Toronto offers a full range of Persian studies courses from world-leading faculty. It is one of the world's most complete programs, which includes languages and literatures, religion and mysticism, as well as politics and culture.

The department offers a variety of graduate degrees: a one- or two-year Master's degree and a doctoral degree fully funded for five years; both degrees have access to a variety of need-based and merit-based scholarships and awards as well as the same courses. The department's course offerings range from the early Achaemenids to contemporary political and cultural debates, and it is particularly strong in the breadth of languages offered, for example several pre-Islamic Iranian languages (like Avestan, Old Persian, and Pahlavi), to Classical Persian and contemporary spoken Persian. These languages are taught in a variety of contexts and from different perspectives, such as linguistics, poetry, mysticism, and religion. The department also complements this with equally strong support in Arabic and Turkish languages.

The faculty have diverse and overlapping areas of specialty, and they cover early and medieval Zoroastrianism, Sufism and Persian mystical literature, as well as cutting-edge theoretical perspectives on Iran's place on the world-stage. What sets it apart from other departments is its inclusion of specialists in ancient, medieval, and modern periods, and its intellectual environment is complemented by the university's many cognate departments, such as the Department for the Study of Religion, the Anthropology department, and the Philosophy department – all of which have scholars, whose interests overlap with Persian religion, culture, and philosophical contributions. All these academic avenues are supported by one of the most robust library systems in North America, whose vast collection is extended by its network of libraries around the world.

In addition to academics, prospective graduate students can expect a lively campus life as well as the city of Toronto surrounding the downtown campus. Toronto is rich with culture and life, boasting an existing nightlife as well as symphonies, theatres, and international film festivals.

For more information, please contact the Graduate Administrator, Michael Godwin.

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The Roshan Graduate Interdisciplinary Program in Persian and Iranian Studies offers MA and PhD degrees focusing on a) modern or classical Persian literature and culture or b) Iranian (or other Persian speaking societies') history, religion, social organization, and politics. The program benefits from the long tradition of Persian and Iranian studies at the University of Arizona's School of Middle Eastern and North African Studies (formerly the Department of Near Eastern Studies) which also offers undergraduate degrees focusing on Persian. The program intends to prepare graduates to work in academic, public, and private positions where extensive and expert knowledge of Iran and other Persian speaking societies such as Afghanistan and Tajikistan is required. In addition to the completion of core courses, superior language competency in Persian is expected. The Roshan Graduate Interdisciplinary Program in Persian and Iranian Studies also creates a broad forum for scholarly activities around Persian and Iranian studies on campus and in the wider community.



Program Coordinator
Sergio Canez
845 N Park Ave
Marshall Bldg, Rm 440
PO Box 210158B
Tucson, AZ 85721-0158
Phone: (520) 621 - 8731
Email: canez@arizona.edu

Roshan GIDP Chair
Dr. Kamran Tallatof
845 N Park Ave
Marshall 452
Tucson, AZ 85719
Phone: (520) 621-2330
Email: talatof@arizona.edu

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All gifts should be sent to Martha Castleberry / MENAS
845 N Park Ave
Marshall Bldg, Rm 440
PO Box 210158B
Tucson, AZ 85721-0158
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Roshan Graduate Interdisciplinary Program in Persian & Iranian Studies



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**The Story of Iran Podcast at UC Davis**

Under the auspices of the Bita Daryabari endowment at UC Davis, Amy Motlagh is producing a podcast called [The Story of Iran](#). The first episode, "Consider the Pomegranate," features a conversation with Professor Persis Karim (SFSU) about the cultural significance of the pomegranate in the Persianate world. The second episode, "Memory/Freedom," is a discussion of the history and meaning of Shahyad/Azadi Tower with Professor Talinn Grigor (UC Davis).

PROGRAM NEWS CONT'D**Corpus Avesticum Berolinense: An Edition of the Zoroastrian Rituals in the Avestan Language**

Alberto Cantera, Free University Berlin

Since April 2018 a new edition of the Avestan texts has been under preparation at the Institute for Iranian Studies of the Freie Universität Berlin. "Corpus Avesticum Berolinense" (CAB), directed by Prof. Alberto Cantera, is a long-term project spanning 12 years and funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG). CAB builds on Cantera's previous collection of Avestan manuscripts in the "Avestan Digital Archive" (ADA) project. Initially focused on the Long Liturgy, the project now also includes the edition of the Shorter Liturgies (Xorde Avesta). Other members of the team are G. König, J. Martinez Porro (research assistants) and I. Cucu (IT-developer).

Two scholarly works of the 20th century have had a significant influence on the Avestan studies. Karl Hoffmann and Johanna Narten's *Der Sasanidische Archetypus* (1989) took up Niels Ludwig Westergaard and Karl Friedrich Geldner's hypothesis of "Stammhandschriften" of Avestan texts, building a bridge between the Avestan manuscripts and a postulated Sasanian archetype of 'the Avesta'. Methodologically, Hoffmann & Narten assigned a new, constitutive value to linguistic criticism, which should take the place of text criticism in the centuries between the assumed "Stammhandschriften" and the archetype. Jean Kellens' article „*Considérations sur l'histoire de l'Avesta*“ (1998) deconstructed the "archetype" and broke with the "linearity" of the transmission assumed by Hoffmann (archetype > "Stammhandschriften" > "extant manuscripts"). Kellens showed that the Yasna could not be derived from the so-called Sasanian Avesta, but also that it could not be the result of a late formulation in "Stammhandschriften". By contrast, he postulated an original liturgical Sasanian Avesta. Some years later he went further assuming that some fundamental traces of the liturgical arrangement, at least of the Long Liturgy, were already reflected in the Young Avestan texts. In the aftermath of Kellens' paper, the idea of the "Stammhandschriften" was challenged by Cantera and Xavier Tremblay. The "philological necessity" for the "Stammhandschriften" depends on a view of the transmission that considers only the written transmission, but not the interplay between orality and literacy and neglects the interaction between manuscripts and ritual practice. Furthermore, the idea of the "ritual Avesta" has been substituted through the notion of the "ritual continuity" (without excluding "change") from the Antiquity until Late Antiquity.

Cantera drew a fundamental conclusion for the edition of the Avestan texts from this revision of our view of the transmission and from the analysis of the Avestan manuscripts he was collecting: the necessity of a new edition of the Avestan texts on the basis of the liturgical manuscripts, which have been neglected since Geldner's edition. Furthermore, we must reflect on ways of text criticism and editorial practices

CORPUS AVESTICUM CONT'D

beyond the archetypical model of the past and take into consideration the interaction between ritual practice and manuscripts. Steps in this process were Cantera's development of a digital manuscript archive, the review of the Avestan studies since the edition of Geldner (*The transmission of the Avesta*, 2012), and the prolegomena for an edition of the Long Liturgy (*Vers une édition de la liturgie longue zoroastrienne*, 2014). As a result, the consequences for the new edition are: the editorial realisation of the ritual character of the Avestan texts (i.e., their positioning within the 'ritual system' and their performative design); their 'variability' (see below), and the decision for one stratum of the manuscript transmission. In his 2020 dissertation, J. Martínez Porro analysed the orthographical conventions of all available manuscripts of the Long Liturgy, providing thus a first tool for tracing the history of the recitation of the Avestan texts and a sure basis for semi-diplomatic editions intended to represent the text according to established chronological and geographical criteria. As an alternative to the attempt to reconstruct the Sasanian archetype, CAB presents the texts as they were recited in the Iranian performances of the Safavid period, choosing always the most archaic variants still used at that time.

According to these new editorial principles CAB has undertaken to create a basis edition of all Zoroastrian rituals in Avestan language. This is not a text-critical edition, but will serve as the foundation for the critical edition being prepared. As aforementioned, it displays the rituals as they were performed in Iran in the Safavid period. Nonetheless, additional information is gathered in the apparatus (mainly from the Middle Persian meta-ritual literature, later liturgical manuscripts and the Persian Revāyats) for the reconstruction of the historical development of these rituals and their performances. In contrast with the previous reductionist and static editions that continue the simplification of the ritual texts already initiated in the exegetical manuscripts, we present the texts of the rituals in their performative dynamism and together with all accessible information about their performance.

The text of the rituals is actually not a fixed one, but depends on many variables. The longer and more complex the rituals, the richer are the possibilities of variation. First, most ceremonies might be performed as a lesser (Pahl. *keh*) or a greater (Pahl. *meh*) one. Second, many textual variants depend on the time, the place and the deity the ceremony is dedicated to, the purpose, etc. Most of these variants were neglected in the previous editions, preventing the understanding of how these texts really work. For displaying the performative dynamism of the texts, we have developed an on-line tool, the CAB Ceremony Generator, that generates each time the text of each ceremony according to the parameters selected by the user.

The ceremony generator, for whose initial development Arash Zeini provided the technical solutions, displays the text of the corresponding ceremony in its ritual context including the ritual instructions in Middle Persian of the liturgical manuscripts. The latter are presented for the first time and accompanied with their English translation

in the version of one selected manuscript for each ceremony. A critical edition of all ritual instructions is currently under preparation by Alberto Cantera.

In order to facilitate further research, free access is granted to the materials on which our edition is based. Thus, each stanza is linked to the presentation of the corresponding passage in the manuscripts available in ADA. Furthermore, transliterations of all manuscripts used for the edition are displayed (currently only for the Long Liturgy and only until chapter 21 of the Yasna). We also provide a link to an automatic collation of the transliterations produced thanks to the cooperation with the project Textual Communities, led by Peter Robinson, at the University of Saskatchewan (Canada). This will be transformed along the course of the project into a text-critical apparatus that will also be accessible online. Finally, a "stanza viewer" will progressively provide further additional information: parallels, supplementary ritual information, quotations of the passage in the Middle Persian literature and a collection of the available translations in Western languages.

The screenshot shows the Avestan Digital Archive (ADA) interface. On the left, a sidebar lists manuscript entries categorized by section (Y_IrS, Y_IndS, Y_IrP, Vr_Irs, Vr_IndS, V_Irs, V_IndS, VwA) and page number. The main area displays a scanned page of an Avestan manuscript (Yasna 27, folio 13v) with red ink highlights. The right side features a toolbar with navigation icons and a search bar, followed by a message about reporting errors and an email address (alberto.cantera@fu-berlin.de). Below the toolbar, a large block of Middle Persian text is displayed with some words highlighted in red, corresponding to the entries in the sidebar.

Y_IrS
0015_MZK4
0040_F3A
0060_ML15285
0082_MZK3
0082_XS1
0084_Nik2

Y_IndS
0100_B3
0110_K1A
0230_L17
0235_G97

Y_IrP
0400_Pt4
0420_T6
0450_E7
0451_G14

Vr_Irs
2001_VL1
2010_G18b
2038_DQ1
2040_MZK1
2101_DZYr1
2104a_MZK2a
2106_G27

Vr_IndS
2230_K8

V_Irs
4000_TU1
4000_TU1
4010_Ave977/978
4025_Ave991
4050_ML16226
4060_RSPA230
4063_HM2
4070_K9
4100_ML15283
4161_VJ

V_IndS
4250_O2
4280_Malik6459
4500_K10

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CORPUS AVESTICUM CONT'D

The work on the texts of the so-called Xorde Avesta is less advanced, since the first phase of the project has been dedicated to the preliminary works that had already been carried out for the Long Liturgy before the beginning of the project. Anquetil's translation of the "Zend-Avesta" (1771) was based mainly on a diplomatic reading of two extensive manuscripts, a manuscript of the "Vīdēvdād Sāde" (P1) and a manuscript called "Yašt-Sāde" by Anquetil (P3), a manuscript that belongs to the (Indian) tradition of the Tamām Xorde Avesta, Geldner's "combined manuscripts". This dichotomy of the manuscripts and the texts included was reformulated under the critique of Hoffmann & Narten's *Der Sasanidischer Archetypus* (1989) in Kellens' Considerations (1998) as that of the "Long Liturgy" and the "Shorter Liturgies". While since then the term "Long Liturgy" was defined and filled by the works of Kellens and Cantera, the (counter-)term "Shorter Liturgies" remained unexplained, and the transmission of these liturgies was seen as based on anthologies. Thus, it was a first goal of the editorial project to establish positive terms of what can be called "Shorter Liturgies" and of their concrete form of transmission, the manuscripts of the Xorde Avesta (see G. König, *Prolegomena zu einer Neuedition des Xorde Avesta*, forthcoming). Against a long-established tradition that understands these manuscripts as "Sammelsurien" (hodgepodes), it can be shown that all manuscripts of the "Xorde Avesta proper" (Geldner) and of the Tamām Xorde Avesta have one and the same general architecture (i.e., the same text selection and order), specific differences between manuscript classes and manuscript age, and finally varieties between single manuscripts. A main tool for a better understanding of the manuscripts was provided by a database which currently includes information (generated by autopsy of manuscripts or catalogue descriptions) on circa 650 manuscripts of the Xorde Avesta and manuscripts related to it. The analysis of the manuscripts became also an important tool for liturgical context of the Xorde Avesta texts which can be divided now in a) situative liturgies (Nērangs etc.) and b) obligate texts bound to certain times: the day-times (texts of the Farziyat), the months (the Yaštis) (lost in the Iranian tradition), the year (Āfrīngāns; Drōn ceremonies). On the basis of the stratum of Iranian manuscripts (in particular of the manuscripts of Rostam Goštāsp, early 18th c.) 'basis editions' of some of the situative liturgies and of the Farziyat have been prepared and provided with introductory remarks on their manuscript transmission and liturgical usage.

Corpus Avesticum Berolinense

An Edition of the Zoroastrian Rituals in the Avestan Language

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Show / Hide Generator

Nerang

Yasna

See navigation bar Latin / Avestan Characters See liturgy metadata

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Y0.1 (=GY0.1a) – YR0.2 VrS0.1 VViS0.1 VyVS0.1

barsom 21 tāg frāgām 2 tāg barsom bastan parhōm kardan sāzish hamāg frāz nihādan ān kas ke zōsh kāmēd kardan ašem pāyāb kardan

ašem, vohū, vahisht, asti,
usta, asti, usta, amāi,
huat, ašai, vahisht, ašem.

Source: Manuscript 0400

Transliteration: biswm 20 W 'ywk pīg'm 2 tāk biswm bstr' pī'hwm krtn' s'cān' hm k pr c HNHTWNmr' W ZK AYŠ MNW zwlyh YCBEN-yt' krtn' ašem, vohū, 'ywk gwptw' W YDE PWN pty'p krtn'

Transcription: barsom 21 tāg frāgām 2 tāg barsom bastan parhōm kardan sāzish hamāg frāz nihādan ān kas ke zōsh kāmēd kardan ašem pāyāb kardan

Translation: The barsom (should consist) of 21 twigs and the fragām two. He should tie the barsom, prepare the parhōm and dispose all the implements. The one who wish to perform in the office of zot should recite one Ašem Vohū and he should clean his hands with pāyāb.

Created: 20 February 2019

Updated: 06 January 2021

Collaborator: A. Cantera



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An Edition of the Zoroastrian Rituals in the Avestan Language

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Ceremony Types

1. Long Liturgy (vrap rato vrap yazane)

Ceremony:

Yasna

Day:

1. Dadvali Ahura Maziči

Dedicatory:

52 Mānig Nāvār

Month:

1. Fravardin

Gah:

Havaei

See ceremony

Yasna

See navigation bar Latin / Avestan Characters See liturgy metadata

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Y0.1 (=GY0.1a) – YR0.2 VrS0.1 VViS0.1 VyVS0.1

barsom 21 tāg frāgām 2 tāg barsom bastan parhōm kardan sāzish hamāg frāz nihādan ān kas ke zōsh kāmēd kardan ašem, vohū, ek gutan ud dast pad pāyāb kardan

ašem, vohū, vahisht, asti,
usta, asti, usta, amāi,
huat, ašai, vahisht, ašem.

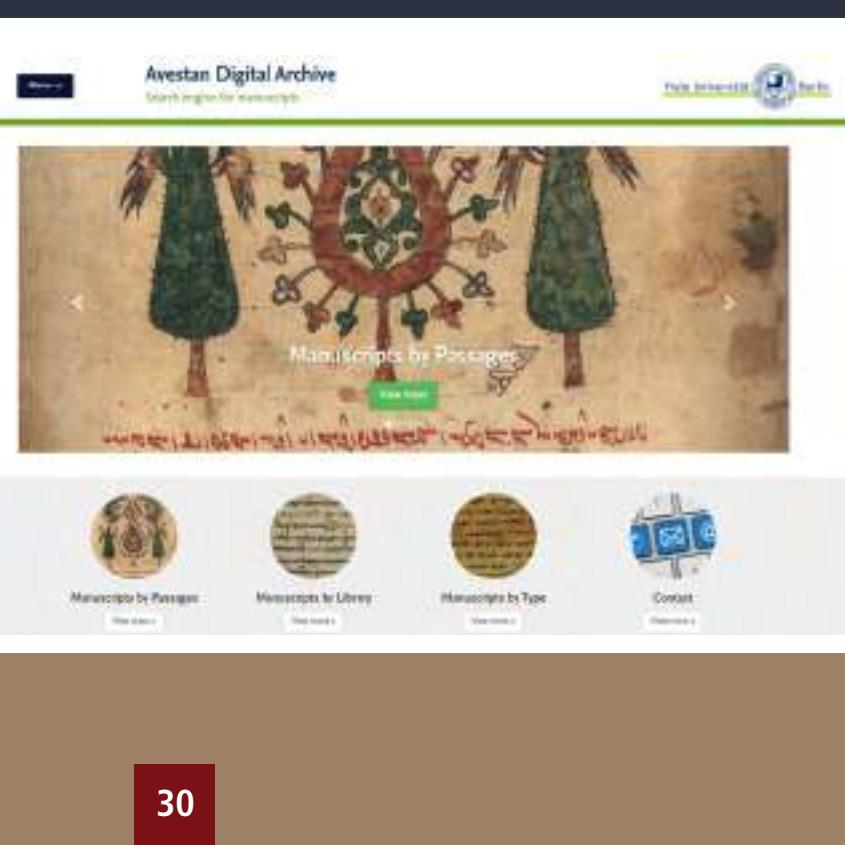


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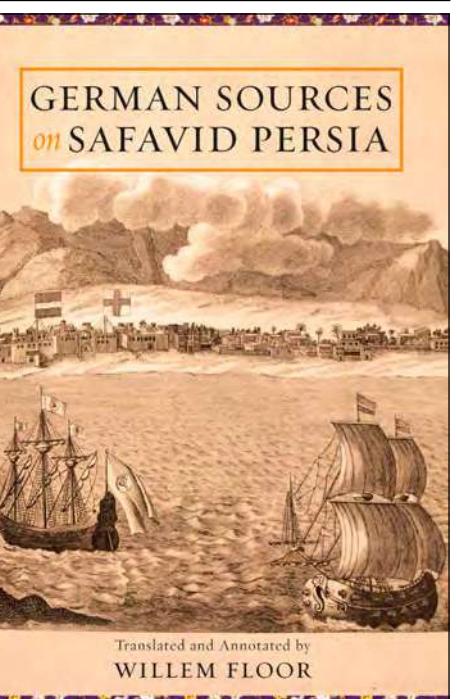
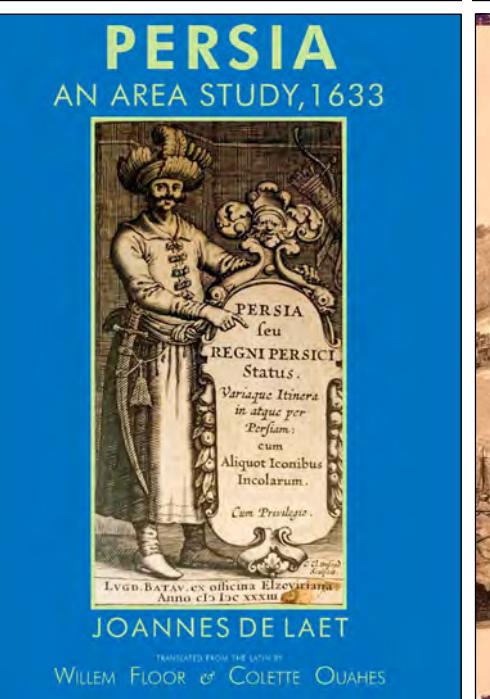
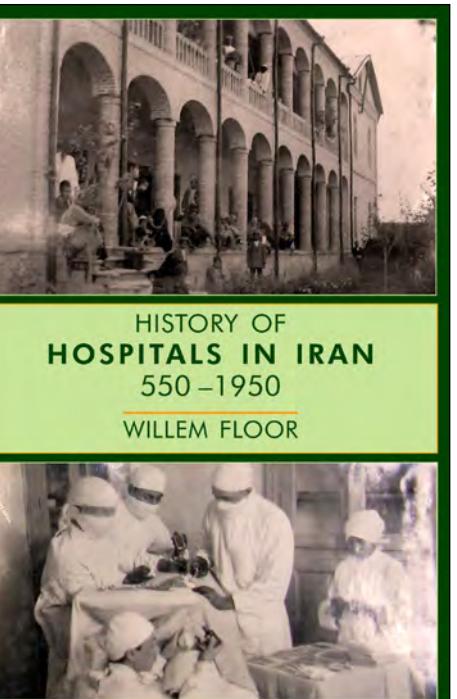
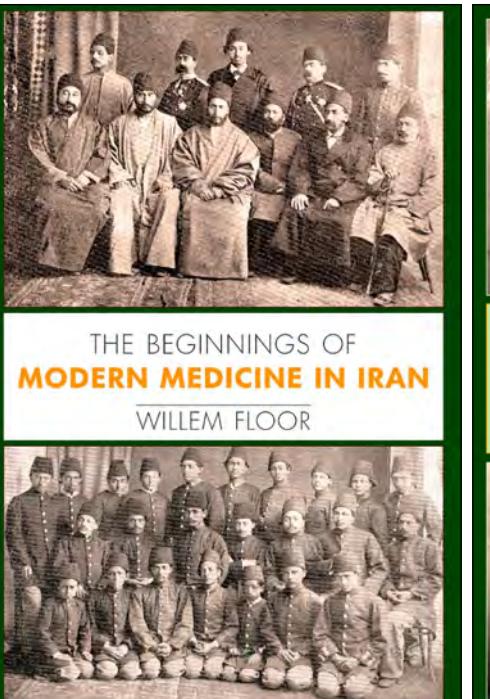
CORPUS AVESTICUM CONT'D



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PROGRAM NEWS CONT'D

Yarshater Center Launches New *Encyclopaedia Iranica Online* Website

The Ehsan Yarshater Center for Iranian Studies at Columbia University is pleased to announce that the *Encyclopaedia Iranica Online* is now freely accessible at <https://brill.com/eiroorthroughhttps://referenceworks.brillonline.com/browse/encyclopaedia-iranica-online>. This new website, hosted by the leading academic publisher Brill, is the only digital platform authorized by Columbia University for the *Encyclopaedia Iranica* content produced and curated by the Yarshater Center.

Encyclopaedia Iranica Online provides corrected and updated articles from older print and online content, and it includes articles from fascicles published by Brill up to the recent XVI/6 (Khomeini – Khorasan XIV). Entirely new online articles will be published as expeditiously as possible. The new *Encyclopaedia Iranica Online* website brings many improvements and conveniences for users, including better integrated graphics and tables and a print-on-demand feature. It offers a more powerful search engine offering researchers the capability to search not only *Encyclopaedia Iranica* content but an array of other Brill online reference works. Professional researchers will also find the ability to cite *Encyclopaedia Iranica* articles enhanced both by their presence on the website of a respected academic publisher and the provision of details such as digital object identifier (DOI) numbers.

In order to view images, login with:

Username: oa

Password: oa

The staff of the Yarshater Center encourage you to visit *Encyclopaedia Iranica Online* soon and often, and we look forward to your comments and suggestions as we continue to work with our Brill partners to expand and improve the website.

Ehsan Yarshater Center for Iranian Studies

Columbia University
450 Riverside Drive - Suite 4
New York, NY 10027
cfisinfo@columbia.edu

ADDITIONS TO THE IRAN DATA PORTAL

The **Iran Data Portal** is delighted to announce the following recent additions:

Annual Budgets

- The 2019-2020 (1399) Budget, both the bill and the law. It should be noted that this budget bill was not discussed in the Majles given the COVID-19 situation.
- The 2020-2021 (1400) Budget, both the bill and the law. The first draft was rejected by the Majles and the government had to amend the bill.
<https://irandataportal.syr.edu/annual-budgets-development-plans>

Five-Year Development Plans

- First Five-Year Development Plan 1989 to 1993 (1368 to 1372)
- Second Five-Year Development Plan 1995 to 1999 (1374 to 1378)
- Third Five-Year Development Plan 2000 to 2004 (1379 to 1383)
- Fourth Five-Year Development Plan 2005 to 2009 (1384 to 1388)
- Fifth Five-Year Development Plan 2011 to 2015 (1390 to 1394)
- Sixth Five-Year Development Plan 2017 to 2021 (1396 to 1400)
<https://irandataportal.syr.edu/annual-budgets-development-plans>

Atlas of Presidential Elections

- Atlas of presidential elections in Iran (1980 to 2017). This atlas is courtesy of Bernard Hourcade, and presents data at the level of electoral districts.
<https://irandataportal.syr.edu/atlas-of-presidential-elections-in-iran>

Sermons by Sunni Ulama

- Sermons by Sunni Ulama. These are audio files of sermons by Molavi Abdolqaffar Naqshbandi and Molavi Behzad Feqhi, in Persian and Baluchi, recorded in 2019
<https://irandataportal.syr.edu/ethnicity-and-religious-services-participation>

Family Ties of the Iranian Political Elite (updated)

- This list of family ties among the political elite of postrevolutionary Iran is based on the original list published in Mehrzad Boroujerdi and Kourosh Rahimkhani, Postrevolutionary Iran: A Political Handbook (Syracuse University Press, 2018).
<https://irandataportal.syr.edu/family-ties-of-the-iranian-political-elite>

In case of questions, requests, or data propositions, please contact the IDP administrator [here](#).

RESEARCH REPORT

Doing Anthropology in the Fields of Religion, Law and Medicine: Assisted Reproductive Technologies in Iran

Shirin Naef, University of Zürich

It is a hot sunny day in September 2010. My plan is to visit the first subspecialty clinic for infertility treatment in Qom, Iran's second most sacred city after Mashhad and a major centre of Shia theology and scholarship. The clinic, affiliated with the Academic Centre for Education, Culture and Research (ACECR), commenced its activities in August 2008 on the birth date of Imam Ali, the first Imam of Shia Muslims and the Prophet Muhammad's paternal cousin and son-in-law – from whom the other eleven Shia Imams were descended. The clinic contains three departments (Embryology, Urology and Gynaecology) where treatment and research on infertility is being conducted, and where a wide range of biomedical techniques such IVF, freezing embryos, eggs or sperm and PGD (preimplantation genetic diagnosis) are being practised.

Ebrahim, the director of the ACECR in Qom is the first person I have a chance to visit. Our meeting is held in his office in the central building of the institute in Qom and one of his assistants joins our conversation. Medical tourism (*turism-e darmāni*) is the first subject that comes up in our talks. He highlights the attraction of Qom as a site of pilgrimage and the presence in the city of the holy shrine of Hazrat-e Masoumeh ("the Pure Saint"), the sister of the eighth Shia Imam Ali ibn Musa al-Reza (765-818 AD). He explains that many infertile couples choose this destination because of its holiness. Emphasizing that the treatments and techniques offered by the clinic are ethical from an Islamic viewpoint, appropriate and in accordance with religious criteria (*mavāzin-e shar'i*), he points to the interest that foreign Muslim patients have taken in the clinic. As the conversation continues, we explore the effects of relaxation, hopefulness and prayer on infertility treatment. After concluding the interview, we set out towards the clinic. It is located six kilometres outside the centre of Qom in the foothills of a mountain that is called *khezr-e nabi* (known in English as the Prophet Khidr). Whilst on the road, Ebrahim and his assistant speak of the holiness of the location and the reasons that led to the IVF clinic being built there. It is believed that three thousand years ago, there was a cave at the top of the mountain where Khidr the Prophet used to retreat to pray – a cave which has now been transformed into a small mosque with a capacity of ten to fifty people. Even years before today, it was regarded as a sacred place for mystics to worship. One of the miracles ascribed to Khidr the Prophet is that he brought greenery to every barren land he walked on and that is the meaning of his name Khidr, which symbolises immortality and fertility.

Another reason that has added to the sacredness of this place is the burial of

fourteen anonymous martyrs of the Iran-Iraq war (1980-1988) who have been put to rest in the foothills of the mountain. The burial site has become a pilgrimage destination. As we are passing by the site, we see a woman wrapped in her black chador sitting in a corner and reciting verses. Across from her is a young man doing daily prayers. We arrive at the Qom Infertility Treatment Clinic – a three-story building and a new development in a quiet residential area. The neighbourhood is considered one of Qom's distinguished districts populated mostly by well-off families. The ground floor consists of a large waiting hall with white marble flooring encircled by almost ten rooms that include the director's office, midwifery room, reception, counselling, and genetic sections. The operation rooms, ultrasound, examination room, recovery, laboratory, cord blood banking and seminar rooms are located on the upper levels. I meet with the clinic's director and some of the personnel. The majority of staff in the clinic are female. An appointment is made to interview the director. She is a gynaecologist and a certified ART specialist. She is from Tehran but according to her account, she calls Qom home now. A friendly talk ensues. According to her, almost forty women and thirty men visit the clinic on a daily basis. Almost 9 percent of them are non-Iranian patients from neighbouring countries and particularly from Iraq. Our conversation continues. She has to visit a woman who is to benefit from egg donation. I manage to get to know the midwifery ward staff better. They are on their break and have gathered in one of the rooms. In the coming days, I will spend more time with them in this very room. A man who has recently become a father has brought sweets and pastries and everyone is busy helping themselves to tea and sweets. I become acquainted with Zahra, a microbiology graduate who works in the laboratory and is currently conducting research on the correlation between the Jalali calendar and IVF – for instance, doing embryo transfers during the period when the moon is not in Scorpio.

In the evening of the same day, there is an internal seminar on sex selection at the clinic. I am also invited to take part in the seminar. The participants are all female professionals and the seminar speaker is a female physician from the laboratory department. Commencing her lecture, she addresses the reasons behind sex selection propensity in various countries. Family balancing and medical reasons are highlighted as two dominant reasons in Iran. The other subject that the speaker touches upon at the end of her talk is related to the ethical aspects of sex selection. She refers to a renowned infertility treatment clinic in Iran where sex selection is not part of its practice. The clinic considers the act morally wrong and reasons that it will lead to a gender imbalance in the population. There are other clinics where sex selection is practiced only for families who have got one or more boys or girls and who wish to have a child of the opposite sex.

That evening I find my way into the courtyard of the Hazrat-e Masoumeh Shrine. As always, it is overcrowded. I am sitting on a platform out in the courtyard, deeply engaged in taking down my notes on today's observations. A family next to me has spread their evening meal there. There are three women – grandmother, mother and daughter. The eldest woman makes me a sandwich, which tastes awesome after leaving a busy afternoon behind. They offer me a cup of tea as well. As I was

RESEARCH REPORT CONT'D

sitting in the courtyard, I noticed a few groups of people carrying a couple of coffins on their shoulders while chanting "*la ilaha illa Allah*" (there is no god but God). It is part of the funeral ritual in Qom to bring the body of the deceased in the coffin and perform *tavāf* (circumambulation, the act of moving around a sacred object) around the Holy Shrine of Masoumeh before taking it to the cemetery for burial. As I am standing there as an onlooker, the elderly woman turns to me and says: "Whenever you see a funeral procession, you should say: *inna lillahi wa inna ilayhi raji'un*, a Quranic verse meaning "truly we belong to God and to Him we shall return."

The term *sacred IVF* occurred to me that evening. On that particular day, I had spent my whole time at the clinic where most of the staff were female. While the clinic offered state-of-the-art ART – from embryo donation to egg freezing, etc. - and scientific studies, there were many sacred, divine and cosmological values in (re) production as well; the clinic was built in a sacred location - a place which not only derived sanctity from [the tombs of] historical figures like Khidr (the prophet) but was doubly respected due to its proximity to the memorial park of anonymous war martyrs. Even the research project of one of the laboratory personnel was about the effect of cosmology and astrology on IVF pregnancy. Before and after the procedure, infertile couples visited Hazrat-e Masoumeh's shrine, where the bodies of the deceased had to be sanctified before burial. This was where I stumbled upon the fact that assisted reproductive technology does not necessarily displace the cosmological phenomena and moral logics that structure kinship and reproduction. Instead, they create new sites and moments for reproducing and redefining these principles. This is understandable if one considers reproduction as a cultural achievement through which the foundational structures and perceptions of a society and its dynamics are reproduced and contested rather than simply the combination or encounter of male and female reproductive substances (of course, necessary but not considered sufficient). Indeed, as Annette Weiner put it, we need to think of reproduction "not as a biological construct, but as a cultural concept in which the basic processes for reproducing human beings, social relations, cosmological phenomena, and material resources are culturally defined and structurally interconnected" (Weiner 1978: 183). It is this understanding of reproduction that I have followed more closely over the years in my research on kinship, marriage and reproduction in Iran.

The first step to my research project began in 2005, the same year the Iranian embryo donation law – passed in 2003 in the Iranian parliament – became fully operative. Embryo donation is a procedure in which embryos created by IVF from another couple's egg and sperm are donated and transferred to infertile couples so that the wife can become pregnant and give birth to a child. The beginning of my interest in kinship studies, however, goes back to the 1990s, when I was studying and practising theatre in Tehran, and became much inspired by Iranian playwright and filmmaker Bahram Beyzai's allegorical approach to

Iranian myths and social reality, and Claude Lévi-Strauss's structural approach to the analysis and interpretation of myths. In autumn 2005, after reading a news report published in the Iranian women's magazine *Zanan*, I had two interviews with the head of the embryo transfer commission of a pioneering IVF clinic and biomedical research centre in Tehran. As a student of the French anthropologist Édouard Conte, whose anthropological scholarship on kinship studies was one of the initial inspirations for my research, I decided to choose the topic as my MA thesis subject in anthropology. This topic has challenged me for more than a decade and my PhD thesis, published in 2017, and some articles are its fruit.¹ In the thesis, I analysed the Iranian approach to the regulation of reproductive technologies, through which medical, Islamic juridical and civil legal authorities come together in forming bioethical legislation and regulations in the national context. Since the first IVF birth in Iran in 1990, the Iranian medical community has not only given full support to the use and development of assisted reproductive technology but has aided the emergence of a powerful, locally-trained body of medical practitioners and biomedical researchers. At the same time, from a religious and legal point of view, most Shia religious authorities and legal scholars have taken a relatively permissive view and generally support assisted reproductive technologies, including paid surrogacy arrangements that are highly controversial elsewhere in the world. The perspective of Shia law, as I have discussed in my book, is a significant element in regulating ART within the national context. Based on a combination of extensive ethnographic fieldwork and textual analysis of important academic and religious seminary publications on bioethical issues in Iran, I illustrated how both anthropology and Islamic jurisprudence offer theoretical tools for reflecting upon ethical questions of this sort.

¹ "Gestational Surrogacy in Iran. Uterine Kinship in Shia Thought and Practice", in Marcia Inhorn and Soraya Tremayne (eds.), *Islam and Assisted Reproductive Technologies. Sunni and Shia Perspectives*, New York: Berghahn Books, 2012, pp. 157-193; The Iranian Embryo Donation Law and Surrogacy Regulations: The Intersection of Religion, Law and Ethics, *Die Welt des Islams*, 2015, 55/3-4: 348-77; Legal Status, Moral Values and Cosmological Order: Embryo Politics in Iran, in *Ethnologie française* 2017/3: 459-470; *Kinship, Law and Religion: An Anthropological Study of Assisted Reproductive Technologies in Iran*, Tübingen: Francke Verlag, 2017. I conducted my ethnography between 2005 and 2011 and subsequently between 2015 and 2018 in the cities of Tehran, Mashhad, Yazd, and Qom. The research was funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG) as part of the Research Training Group "Bioethics" at the International Centre for Ethics in the Sciences and Humanities (IZEW) at the University of Tübingen. I am very grateful for their generous and intellectual support for both the research and the publication of my book.



Khezr-e Nabi Mountain, Qom, 2010.
Jamkaran, the Hidden Imam's Mosque, is another popular pilgrimage and sacred site in Iran, which is also located near this mountain.

RESEARCH REPORT CONT'D

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Shirin Naef received a Ph.D. in Social Anthropology from the University of Zürich and postdoctoral training in Bioethics at the International Centre for Ethics in the Sciences and Humanities (IZEW) at the University of Tübingen. She studied Social Anthropology, Islamic Studies and General Linguistics at the University of Bern, Switzerland. From 10/2018 to 06/2019 she was fellow at the Käte Hamburger Center for Advanced Study "Law as Culture" at the University of Bonn, starting to work on her second monograph on the history of charity in Iran.

THE SOUNDS OF TEHRAN

Sonic Tehran (<https://www.sonictehran.com/>) is an interdisciplinary project exploring Tehran as a sounded space and funded by the Leverhulme Trust.

The project asks how sound shapes, and is shaped by, the urban environment. It asks what an in-depth attention to sound might reveal about the city, its shared spaces and conflicted history. How has the city been experienced, remembered and imagined sonically? In what ways are dimensions of difference such as gender, class and religion inflected in the city sounds and how are competing claims over the control of urban space negotiated sonically? And how is sound implicated in the construction of place and community, particularly in the context of rapid urban change and regeneration?

Through personal memories, oral history interviews, sonic diaries, blog posts, sound walks and sound mapping, the project aims to document and explore Tehran's rich sonic heritage.

<https://www.sonictehran.com/> provides a platform for sharing sounds, images and ideas. Project outcomes will include a book on the sounds of Tehran, a documentary film on Tehran as a sounded space and an exhibition on Sonic Tehran.

The makers of SONIC TEHRAN are keen to hear from anyone who would be interested in sharing their sonic experiences of Tehran, including short audio or video examples. They are also inviting guest contributions to the blog in the form of short (c.2,000 word) articles on some aspect of sonic Tehran (or other kinds of contribution such as poetry inspired by Tehran). Contributions will include author biographies and links to current profiles and publications. Other ways of getting involved in the project are listed here: <https://www.sonictehran.com/contact>

SANCTUARY OF CRYSTALS: MIRRORING MODERN IRANIAN ART IN THE WORKS OF MONIR FARMANFARMAIAN

By Delaram Hosseinioun, Leiden University

*I told to my gardener, "Catch me a bee."
 He said, "What do you want a bee for?
 I said, "I'd like to have a bee for a pet."
 So, I got the bee, got tweezers, then held the wings with the tweezers, and put the legs in the ink, and put it on the paper. It started to walk around and it was so beautiful. Then I got a bigger bee. The bees, I washed them with water, put them on the floor, and put honey and sugar and dates that they can eat, and then they worked the next day for me.*

— Monir Shahroudi Farmanfarmaian

This short research note surveys the flourishing mélange of modern art within the Iranian tradition in glassworks of the artist Monir Shahroudi Farmanfarmaian (1922-2019). Combining cut-glass Persian mosaic techniques of embedding fragments of mirrored glass in plaster (called *ayeneh-kari*) with abstract geometry, Farmanfarmaian became the queen of dazzling mirrored mosaic works and glass paintings, initiating along the way modern Iranian feminist art.

Figure 1:
 Self Portrait, Jack Manning/
 The New York Times, 1975,
 dimension unknown.



SANCTUARY OF CRYSTALS cont'd

As the Constitutional Revolution of 1905-11 awakened Iranian artists, they aspired to initiate a new epoch. With the growth of the public sphere, various movements and doctrines found expression in the aftermath of the revolution. Artists also found they could enunciate their ideologies more candidly and were keen to challenge social conventions. Jalil Ziapour (1920-1999), the father of modern painting in Iran, notes "I realized that Iranian art in the 1940s and '50s was facing difficulties, and naturalism was no longer sufficient for our expression. I felt the need for revolution, the revolution of art. I realised that for this revolution I had to start with resistance against the repetition and imitation that prevent creativity. [...] New artists are children of the presence, and the only way to survive is to be the frontier" (Interview 1989). Despite the outspoken manifestos of Ziapour, female artists did not enjoy the same freedoms as men, and only during the short period of 1940–1960, when Iranian modern art flourished, female artists found a golden platform on which to present their works of art, fulfilling a need for recognition.

Monir Shahroudi was raised by educated parents in the religious town of Qazvin in northwest Iran, where she was born in 1922 (16/09/1301). After studying at the University of Tehran at the Faculty of Fine Arts, she moved to New York City in 1944 and in 1949 graduated with a degree in fashion illustration from the Parsons School of Design. Absorbed into the American art scene of the time, she worked with artists including Jackson Pollock, Joan Mitchell, and, later, Andy Warhol. Returning to Iran in 1957, she married the brilliant international lawyer Abolbashar Farmanfarmaian whom she had met in New York. Her work was featured at the Iran Pavilion in the 1958 Venice Biennale. In 1976 she hosted her old friend Andy Warhol in Tehran. The 1979 Revolution forced her into exile for more than two decades. She returned briefly to Iran in 1992 and returned to Iran for good in 2004, where she died in April 2019.

Inspired by the crystal tiles of the fourteenth-century shrine of Shah Cheragh (King of Light) in Shiraz, Farmanfarmaian noted in her diary, "The very space seemed on fire, the lamps blazing in hundreds of thousands of reflections". She wrote again about her experience in her memoir, *A Mirror Garden*:

"I imagined myself standing inside a many-faceted diamond and looking out at the movement and fluid light, all solids fractured and dissolved in brilliance, in space, in sun. It was a universe unto itself, architecture transformed into performance, all movement and fluid light, all solids fractured and dissolved in brilliance, in space, in prayer. It was so beautiful, so magnificent. I was crying like a baby" (*A Mirror Garden*, 2007, p. 186).

Farmanfarmaian's memoir manifests Ziapour's belief that "artists are the representatives of the national identity and the clear pictures of the personality of a civilized society. The deepest and most sensitive values of each society are captured in artists' minds, and by adopting the beauty of art, they represent those values and ideologies, and translate them into a tangible context." (Interview 1949)

The correlation of mysticism with numerology, Islamic geometry and modern architecture frame the kaleidoscopic mirror mosaics of Monir Farmanfarmaian. As Farmanfarmaian notes, the epiphany in Shiraz left her "fired up with ideas", inspiring her to delve into sophistic poetry and doctrine, especially as metaphoric numbers and geometric shapes play a major role in both. In sophistic thinking, for example, the number eight is associated with eternity and heaven, which is embedded not only in Iranian philosophy but also in the mosaic decorations of shrines and sanctuaries. Pursuing this imagery, Farmanfarmaian combines traditional Iranian patterns and craftsmanship with abstract Western approaches (Figure 3 & 4).

Through a modern adaptation of the Persian miniature, Farmanfarmaian creates a unique hybrid image, and invites the spectator to see herself through this merging of elements and perspectives. Subtly, her art also has a delicate yet solid feminine touch, though the complex form of her artwork surpasses genders.

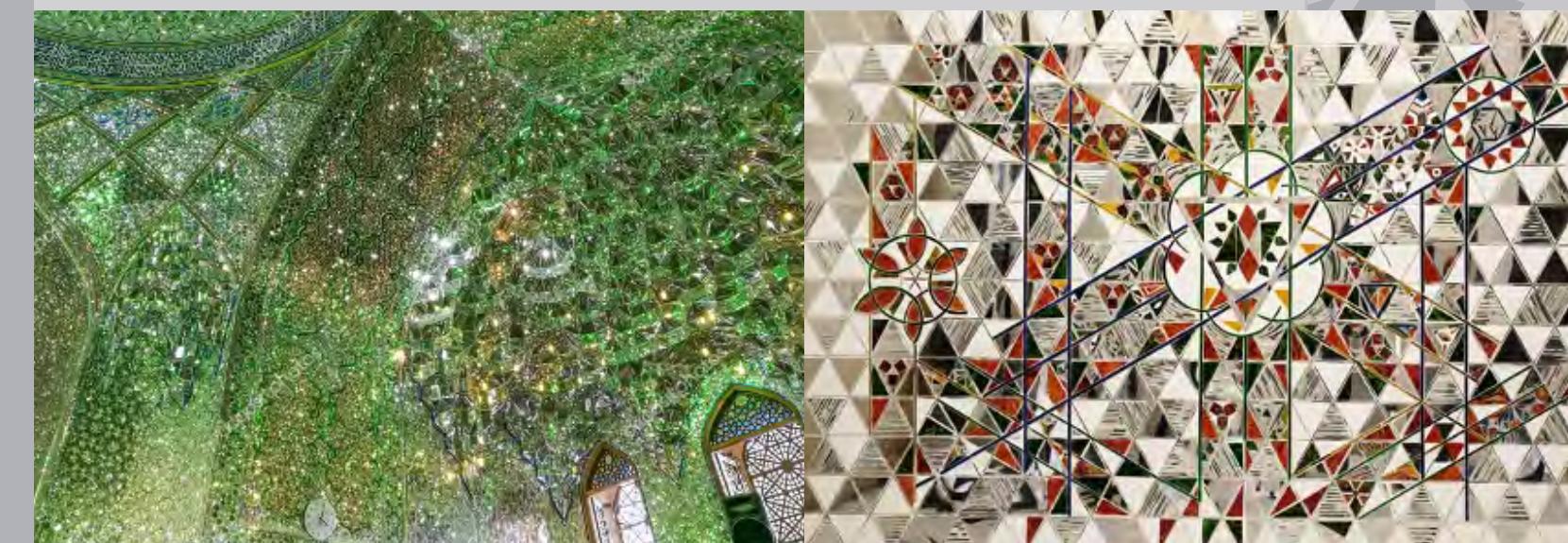


Figure 2: Interior of Shah Cheragh Shrine in Shiraz.

Figure 3: Monir Farmanfarmaian, Shahzed's Garden (1), 2010, mirror and reverse glass painting on plaster and wood, 180x110x4 cm / Photo Courtesy of the Artist and The Third Line.

SANCTUARY OF CRYSTALS cont'd

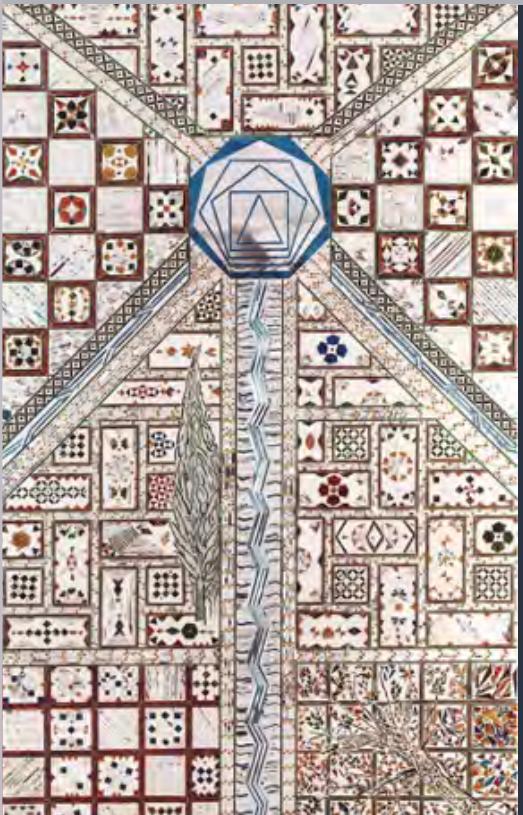


Figure 4: Monir Farmanfarmaian, Gabbeh, 2009, Mirror, reverse-glass painting and plaster on wood, 93x150 cm, Close up, Photo Courtesy of the Artist and The Third Line.

Remarkably, when the spectator stands in front of each artwork, the fragmented mirrors lure their attention to the multiplicity of being and the plausibility of looking into one's self in parallel aspects, leading to the loss of a primary focal point or the perfect image that one is used to seeing or seeking. The mirror itself has always been associated with women, often carrying negative gender-based connotations, such as an obsession with one's own image.

Mikhail Bakhtin (1895-1975), the Russian philosopher and literary critic, suggests that "no individual perspective is adequate to the whole in itself, for only the concrete totality of perspectives can present the whole, thus the languages of heteroglossia, like mirrors that face each other, each of which in its own way reflects a little piece, a tiny corner of the world, force us to guess at and grasp behind their inter-reflecting aspects for a world that is broader, more multi-levelled and multi-horizoned than would be available to one language, one mirror" (*The Dialogic Imagination*, 1982, pp. 225-26).

Further, Bakhtin argues, when individuals encounter one another, they occupy a space that they themselves cannot access or see, therefore through an evolving dialogue they interlocate and comprehend one another. Then we can only understand ourselves through other people and their perceptions. As the existence of the Other is linked to narratives that are beyond the artist's awareness, we see our lives as reflections in the consciousness of other people and then we return to ourselves, therefore each of the mirror mosaics reflects endless knots of narratives which are up to the viewer to decipher.

Farmanfarmaian's art manifests and confirms Bakhtin's idea that we affirm our outward image "out of the other and for the other human being" (*Art and Answerability*, 1990, p. 30). The importance of Bakhtin's theory to Farmanfarmaian's art is that we are not looking at ourselves in the mirror for ourselves, but are assessing our exterior for its possible effect on other people: "for others through others" (p. 33). For Bakhtin, there is a profound difference between one's own notion of the inner self as experienced by the person and the recognition of its outer value by other people, manifesting the essence of the mirror works.

This statement can further be used as an accurate definition of the duality that Iranian women have had to cope with as they have had to ignore or hide their individual feminine features and adopt an imposed cultural image as the Other." (*Art and Answerability*, p. 24).

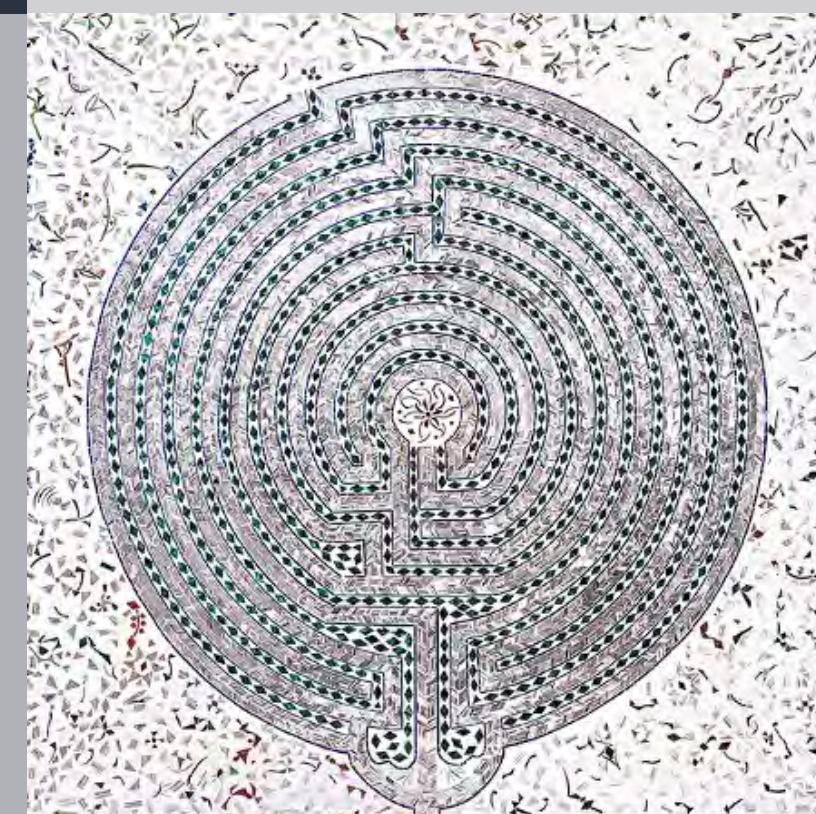


Figure 5: Monir Farmanfarmaian, Untitled (Maze), 2015 Mirror and reversed glass painting on plaster and wood, 135 x 135 cm, Courtesy of The Third Line and the Artist.

SANCTUARY OF CRYSTALS cont'd

This statement can further be used as an accurate definition of the duality that Iranian women have had to cope with as they have had to ignore or hide their individual feminine features and adopt an imposed cultural image as the Other." The distortions caused by the breaking of the mirror and reassembling it into a whole that characterize Farmanfarmaian's artwork reveal this "distinctive and unnatural expression." By fragmenting the image of the imposed other, Farmanfarmaian not only grants her spectators the notion of recognition, but as the female creator, she reconstructs the understanding of one's self.

Farmanfarmaian's mirror mosaics not only echo her intertwining of the aesthetics of the West and the East, but also show how a female artist's reflective heteroglossia allowed her to take an initial concept further and establish her own narrative. In an interview, she explained, "geometry has many different possibilities to create unlimited designs" (2014). By merging the classical Persian patterns with the modern Western mise-en-scène, Farmanfarmaian urges us to reflect on the plausibility of entwined narratives and unlimited identities, granting her spectators a reflection to ponder about their own visage and entity.

Bahman Kiarostami's film *Monir* (2014) documents Farmanfarmaian's life and work, and she received her first international comprehensive retrospective (<https://www.guggenheim.org/exhibition/monir>) when her work was exhibited in 2015 at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York City. In December 2017, the University



Figure 6: Monir Farmanfarmaian in her Tehran salon, 1975. Bukhara Turkoman textile in background. Courtesy of the artist and The Third Line, Dubai.



Figure 7: Monir Farmanfarmaian in Brisbane at the opening of 'The 6th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art' (APT6) in 2009 / Photograph: Natasha Harth © QAGOMA.

of Tehran opened the Monir Museum in Negarestan Garden with a collection of 51 works donated by the artist. It is the first museum in Iran devoted solely to a woman artist.

"For me inspiration always comes from Iran, from my history, from my childhood, for better or for worse. I always go with the feeling of my eyes, and with my heart, and that is my main inspiration." (Monir Farmanfarmaian cited in Obrist et al, 2011, p.22).



Impressions from the new Monir Farmanfarmaian Museum in Negarestan, Tehran

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Delaram Hosseinioun received an MA in Literary Criticism from the University of Exeter and a second MA in Cultural Studies from KU Leuven University. In her PhD project at the University of Leiden, she uses post-structuralist French psychoanalysis and modern Russian literary criticism, namely the revelation of female identity as the neglected Other, to look at contemporary feminist conceptual art in the Middle East.

STUDIES BEGIN FOR RESTORING IRAN'S FIRST MODERN UNIVERSITY

September 22, 2020

TEHRAN – Technical and engineering studies have been commenced on restoring Dar ul-Funun, the first scholastic center of Iran which was established in Tehran in 1851.

In order to identify and evaluate the indicators and necessities of the building's improvement, geophysical, geotechnical and material strength studies are being done by Iranian experts and engineers.

The quantity and topography of qanats (subterranean aqueducts) and wells which have been dug or passing beneath the historical monument; traditional mortars being employed, and strengthens of the bricks, are among other factors being taken into account for the survey.

Moreover, a number of trenches will be carved across the monument and its premises as prerequisite for the vast restoration project.

For the time being, the Ministry of Education assumes ownership of the historical center which is a symbol for the start of modern education era in the country.

Sometimes referred to as Iran's first modern university, the 19th-century institute was established by Mirza Taqi Khan Farahani (1807-1852), nicknamed 'Amir Kabir', who was chancellor under Naser al-Din Shah Qajar.

Cultural Heritage experts Parham Janfeshan has said this historic school is a symbol for commencement of modern educational system in the country, and (now) all cultural and municipal bodies should work together in order to complete restoring it as soon as possible.

Established in 1851, Dar ul-Funun has an atmospheric garden that is hemmed by walls featuring Persian poetry inscribed on decorative tiles. Parts of the property have recently been handsomely restored with the aim of making it into a museum on education. According to Encyclopedia Iranica, the number of students in its first year reflected immediate popularity of Dar ul-Funun, with about 105 students enrolling in seven main subjects.



CONFERENCE REPORTS

A Retrospective on Kamran Diba's Architecture

Samar Saremi, University of Montréal



Figure 1. Kamran Diba. The architecture of the Changing times. The 1950s

My interest in architecture has always transcended its physical dimensions. One of my obsessions was to influence and intensify human interaction and activity...I believe that the mode of human interaction which creates particular patterns of activity within an architectural space is of utmost importance.

(Diba 1981, p.8)

The present text reports on two roundtables convened at the 2020 AIS Biannual Conference titled: *A Retrospective on Kamran Diba's Architecture* held on Aug 30th and Sep 3rd, 2020 respectively. The roundtables were dedicated to Kamran Diba's architectural oeuvre and vision during his brief years of professional practice in Iran from 1966 to 1978. His vernacular approach to architecture, accompanied by a conviction that architecture has the power to positively transform society, led to a wide range of architectural projects sensitive to Iran's environmental and cultural characteristics.

Kamran Diba was born in 1937 in Tehran. He studied architecture and sociology at Howard University in Washington, D.C., from 1958 to 1965. After his return to Iran, he established the company D.A.Z. Consulting Architects and Engineers in 1969 in Tehran, with a focus on urban planning and social projects.

His projects are extensive, but most notably, he is celebrated as the architect and founding director of the *Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art (TMoCA)*. An iconic

CONFERENCE REPORTS CONT'D

architectural monument and a dynamic public institution, the Museum was initially intended to celebrate young and emerging Iranian artists' works. It also became home to the most extensive collection of modern Western art outside Europe and the United States. Diba's urban projects were equally innovative. His Shushtar New Town received international recognition, including the 1986 Aga Khan Award for Architecture.

Diba left Iran shortly before the 1979 Revolution. As a result, many of his great projects remained unrealized. Despite this, his legacy has remained robust, and his design ideas have inspired generations of Iranian architects.

In conversation with Kamran Diba, the panelists explored the three main aspects of his work, i.e. Architecture, Art, and Urbanism.

The roundtable brought together Bijan Shafei (M.Arch.), Architect and founding member of the research group '*Architecture of the changing time*', Pamela Karimi (Ph.D.), Architect and Associate Professor of Art History at the University of Massachusetts (Dartmouth), Azam Khatam (Ph.D.), Research Affiliate at The City Institute at the York University in Toronto, and the panel organizer Samar Saremi (M.Arch.), architect and a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Montreal.

In his talk titled *Kamran Diba: The architect of Changing Times*, Bijan Shafei examined the context of modern architecture prior to Diba's practice in Iran. He contextualized Diba's ideas in the social environment during the 1960s and 1970s in search of different sources of influence on young Diba to observe how he created his unique spaces to respond to the spirit of his time. Shafei emphasized the role of official support for new theoretical platforms in the country that resulted in having three international architectural congresses in 1970, 1974 and 1976 where many well-known figures in architecture were present and progressive dialogues promoted a more holistic understanding of architecture for the contemporary world. The influence of Kamran Diba's sociological studies on his design was clear from the beginning of his practice in Iran.

Shafei presented a trajectory of Diba's projects showing his methodology and thought in each of them in the context of Modern Iranian Architecture. Diba's first project in Iran was a small neighbourhood park, Garden of Yousef-abad (Shafagh), for Tehran's Municipality.

Amongst many ideas implemented in this remarkable project, he introduced a new understanding of the Persian garden so as to make this space a community center for the neighbourhood and move beyond a gated place of repose, suggesting the social potentials of a city park that is also a walkway connecting four corners of the neighbourhood. Additional elements, including a family center, library, amphitheatre, children's atelier, and keeping an old edifice in front of the willow trees north of the site create a vibrant and soulful place inviting all. The human-size sculptures of men and women made by Parviz Tanavoli, a leading artist, added to the place's intimate sense.

Shafei identified three approaches in Diba's projects: humanistic, geometrical, and mystical. The humanist and geometric approaches are present in most of them, and for the mystical approach, Shafei pointed to a small cubical Prayer Room north of the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art. Initially, this space was designed to accommodate the construction workers for their prayer and contemplation time under the sky. The space has no ceiling, and as Shafei displayed, the project is an earth sculpture.

In her contribution, titled *Art in Architecture: A conversation with Kamran Diba*, Pamela Karimi examined Diba's major project, the *Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art* (1967-76). Diba also was the museum's director from 1976 to 1978. In 1967, when he designed the museum, comparable institutions were very few in the world. Diba paid particular attention to the way visitors and pedestrians interact with the site. Located in central Tehran, the museum is aimed to be an inviting and accessible space for the public with an open sculpture garden surrounding it.



Figure 2. Garden of Yousef-abad and Community Center. Kamran Diba.1966-69



Figure 3. Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art (TMoCA). Kamran Diba.1967-76

The two roundtables were conducted in Persian and are accessible on Vimeo:

- Aug 30, 2020: <https://vimeo.com/453386020>
- Sep 3, 2020: <https://vimeo.com/465957837>

CONFERENCE REPORTS CONT'D

The Museum inherited an extensive collection of national and international Modern Art which was saved during the turbulent times of revolution by Diba's appointed director and transferred to the basement where it is stored still. Due to prohibitions of showing nude paintings in the Islamic Republic of Iran, the collection was exhibited only on few occasions during the past 42 years. Diba's intentions in choosing the western artworks stemmed from his urge to create a first-hand experience for Iranians who are under the constant influence of the west: "As we imported western technology and science, why not the least harmful of all, making an introduction to western art available to Iranians." (Diba, 1981, p.3)

The opening night of TMoCA in October 1977 was a historical event. When the Shah inaugurated the building, it is said that an art piece ("Oil Pool" by Noriyuki Haraguchi) at the heart of the Museum, which was a large oil basin reflecting the columns and the light catchers, had caught his attention. While he was informed that the material is oil and not glass, he was not convinced and touched the black liquid. The oil on the Shah's hand became an allegory to the fall of his monarchy in 1979.

Pamela Karimi presented photographs of the *Club Rasht 29* (1967-1970), an alternative space for artists and their guests in Tehran, founded by Kamran Diba, Parviz Tanavoli and Roxana Saba.

Having a woman partner, Diba explained, was significant in creating a new environment away from older café style intellectual corners for men only of the 1950s, and towards making an equal space of work and leisure for women in arts. It was a meeting place serving meals, music and sometimes unofficial performances. In a Bauhaus-style flat in Tehran with the traditional Iranian furniture and a different mixture of nationalities, this club created an art community. A spatial concept for such a community was new even in the west. Karimi pointed to two alternative spaces in New York City; *112 Greene* and *55 Mercer St. Gallery* that both opened after Club Rasht 29 in 1970.

Diba's attempts to create an art community influenced the new generation of Iranian artists. This quest for a community was most visible during the campaign against decisions about the renovation of TMoCA and the changes in its brand name and logo by the new director in 2021. The campaign calls for a democratic election conducted by art community members for the post of TMoCA director.

The links of the debates in social media in Persian:

https://www.instagram.com/p/CKgLTuGgusr/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
https://www.instagram.com/tv/CJrPTqzF1x2/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link

Club Rasht 29 also was a model for a new economic activity to support the fine arts. Artists were registered and would contribute as club members. Karimi compared it to the participatory budgeting model utilized by some artists in Iran to fund their works without governmental resources in post-revolutionary times.

Pamela Karimi referred to Diba's installation and performance art projects as the first ones in the country, inspiring a new generation of artists. Following Diba's experiences in creating alternative spaces for displaying art, Karimi showed how new spaces were utilized, such as rooftops and post-war bunkers by young artists in the absence of official galleries since the 1990s. Karimi presented an interactive bronze sculpture built by Tanavoli in another outstanding Diba project, *the Garden of Niavarán* (1970-78), as a participatory art case. Interactively, the audience can decide which book to install in the hands of the bronze man reading eagerly. Karimi linked it to Negar Farajiani, a young woman artist's new project using a giant beach-ball for the passerby to play in south Tehran's principal square.

During the time of the 1979 revolution, the sculpture of 'the passerby' on a bench in front of the TMoCA was removed, and Karimi connected that incident to other displacements in later years, such as the 'Us' sculpture by Afshin Seyghali, showing how public space is now supervised authoritatively against the free flow of movements and activities that Diba envisaged around the Museum.

Samar Saremi explored Diba's ideas through three of his unbuilt architectural and urban projects in her contribution titled *A Dialogue: Unbuilt projects of Kamran Diba*. From the 1960s, a new force for 'Total Development' was sweeping away Iranian cities' old fabrics. It promoted destruction over renovation and Diba, with a few like-minded architects, was against this wave. Using their connections with the royal court, they tried to stop applying this mindset, and in few cases, were successful.

One of the preservation projects of the old city fabric was in Isfahan. In 1973, Diba participated in the preservation committee as the Queen's representative. With the governor's support, 100 houses were selected by the Ministry of Culture and Arts to be renovated and used. To finance the renovations, the committee decided to urge governmental and non-governmental institutions to buy these houses and renovate them to fulfil their needs, mostly around residential and office use.

Further, Diba designed an office and a civic center in the old fabric to organize the neighbourhood. His project was to design a network of connected courtyards surrounded by introverted buildings in a wheat farm. As he calls it, the romantic spaces were an essential part of the office complex since they could also be spaces where the project could expand and grow if needed.

In another urban development project in Shiraz, which was the expansion of the

CONFERENCE REPORTS CONT'D

Shrine of Shah Cheragh in 1968, Diba pursued a minimum intervention approach (contrasting with the total planning approaches of the previous expansion project of Shi'a Shrines). Near the shrine were the house of the Báb and sacred sites for the Bahá'í Faith. However, major destructions of the old city fabric before Diba's intervention had changed the site drastically.

"A large area around the shrine was cleared for the expansion of outdoor and indoor facilities, including hostels, libraries, a museum, restaurant facilities and shops. We tried to follow the tradition of vernacular architecture, which is a prominent feature of the immediate neighbourhoods, by making internally oriented architecture with interconnected courtyards, arcades and covered passages linking two existing mosques and a bazaar." (Diba, 1981, p.102) Diba believes that sometimes urban planning ideas go against the architectural focus on the singularity of the buildings. In his approach, he puts the urban before the architectural, suggesting that architecture must adapt itself to the urban requirements and the place's character.

In her talk titled *Shushtar New Town: Ventures of A Utopian Design in Times of Revolution*, Azam Khatam examined the transformation process in Diba's well-known urban project, Shushtar New Town. The main phase of the project fell into the years of the Iraq war (1980-88), reacting also to the displacement of the population in Khuzestan. Shushtar New Town bears a bizarre conflict with its time. Even the post-war reconstruction era, with its desire for 'worlding practices,' ignored the city. Designed to challenge the gated-community model, the city turned into a stigmatized town. Nevertheless, the city's integrated body, knitted together by a desire for inclusion and high-taste architecture, defies its current marginal situation in Iranian urbanity.

In 1975, the *Karoun Agro-Industries Corporation (Karoun AIC)* was established as a mechanized sugar-cane industry in northern Khuzestan. Emulating other large state-owned industrial units of the time, the Karoun AIC managing board planned to build a company town to settle groups of its workers close to the workplace. Together with *Iran Housing Corporation* and funded by the *Iran Social Security Organization, DAZ Architects, Planners, and Engineers* were commissioned to build the town.

DAZ renegotiated the city's location, suggesting that city building close to an agricultural zone was a waste of investment and required urban infrastructures. As Azam Khatam argues, the decision to build close to Shushtar old city, the ancient town

where remnants of UNESCO heritage sites, Achaemenid and Sassanid irrigation structures are located, changed the dynamism of the industrial project and urbanization in the region. Diba's project went far beyond the company towns' common scheme, making a unique urban planning model for industries in Iran. The project received the Aga Khan Award for architecture in 1986 and was widely acknowledged and celebrated internationally.

The company towns in Iran were only intended to be a housing complex and not a habitat. Also, they usually were isolated towns with no dynamic relationship with the towns nearby, thus creating segregated cities housing different occupational ranks in disperse locations. By contrast, Shushtar New Town was envisioned as a continuation of the old town and was located in its vicinity, helping to integrate the new residents. Shushtar New Town was designed to allow the occupants ownership, which created security and a sense of belonging for the inhabitants. But most of the company towns were the property of the companies. Worker's dependency upon the industries or mines made them temporary occupants, creating problems for them, especially in their older years.

Kamran Diba's intention was to create a town that was "sympathetic to the cultural values of Iranian society and yet maintains a traditional continuity with the past" (Diba, 1981, p.168). The town was structured around the main pedestrian boulevard, weaving different neighbourhoods and leading to a pedestrian bridge on the *Karoun* river towards the old Shushtar. On the way, there were gardens, squares, arcades, bazaars and bridges. There were north-south narrow and shaded alleyways, open play areas, a bathhouse, a central neighbourhood plaza, and two distinctly designed mosques to break the horizontal grid.

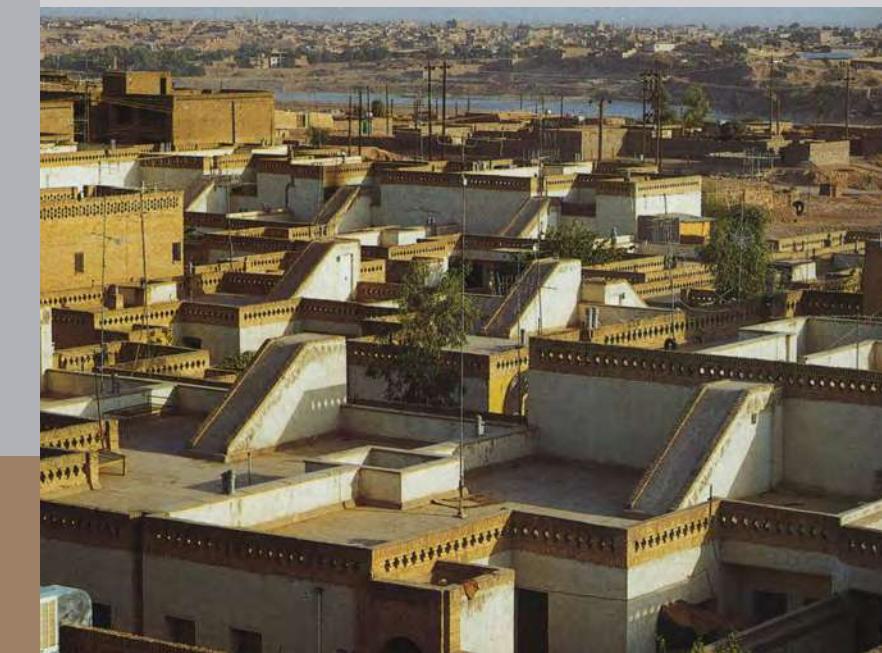


Figure 4. Shushtar New Town.
Kamran Diba.1974-78

CONFERENCE REPORTS CONT'D

From 1976 to 1980, the first phase's construction was completed, yet following the revolution of 1979, Kamran Diba went to forced exile. The political upheaval transformed the project's socio-economic context, weakening the managing power of *Karoun AIC*, and the project gradually diverted from its initial masterplan. By the start of the Iran-Iraq war in 1980, war refugees and migrant populations would seek refuge in newly built units of The New Town, and small landowners who sold their land to the company claimed the part of the urban land in the city. In the absence of urban management, these processes would alter the future development of the town.

During the 46 years of the project's realization, Shushtar New Town has developed unevenly through the encroachment of different interest groups and claims over the city to change its unique fabric. Through inconsistent and conflicting interventions such as opening the pedestrian alleyways to cars and occupying public places to the advantage of individual residents, they jeopardized the initial masterplan's communal character.

At the moment, the intricate informal settlements surrounding the New Town as a result of ongoing migrations, and an extensive housing development and university complex situated in its proximity, create fragments of dwellings estranged from one another. In May 2020, following pressure from civil society and architects, *Shushtar New Town* was finally registered as an *Iranian modern heritage site* based on its international recognition. As Azam Khatam pointed out, this event can promote a movement to integrate socially and spatially the three existing fragments of the city to revive the potential of assimilation through a new masterplan. She explored the possibilities of integrating Diba's initial approach to this new masterplan.

The roundtable engaged Kamran Diba and a few architectural and urban historians in a discussion about Diba's built and unbuilt projects as well as his abiding legacy. It explored how, forty years after his departure, his vision and innovative design methods are still relevant for Iran.

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The architect Samar Saremi is a partner at Tajeer Consulting Architects in Tehran, and a Ph.D. candidate in Anthropology at the University of Montreal. She received a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) Doctoral Fellowship (2011 to 2013), and holds a Master's degree in History and Theory of Architecture from McGill University. Saremi studies the power dynamics responsible for developing sacred sites, particularly in the case study of the Shrine of Imam Reza in Mashhad, Iran.

CONFERENCE REPORTS CONT'D

Professor Syed Amir Hasan Abidi Memorial Conference 2021

The Professor Syed Amir Hasan Abidi Memorial Society is pleased to announce that the proceedings of its centenary conference, held on 26 & 27 February 2021, are available [online](#).

Professor Syed Amir Hasan Abidi was an eminent scholar of Iranian Studies and Persian. He wrote over 2500 articles and 26 books and presented papers at numerous conferences, seminars and symposia.

In June 1969, he travelled to Iran as guest of the Imperial Ministry of Arts and Culture. During his stay in Iran, some of his works were accepted for publication by the Bunyad-e Farhang-e Iran. He was again invited to Iran in October 1971 – this time to participate in the World Congress of Iranologists, held in Shiraz. To appreciate his meritorious services to the cause of Persian Language and literature, the President of India awarded him the Certificate of Honour in Persian on August 15, 1972.

In 1974, Prof. Abidi travelled to Turkey on the invitation of the Turkish Government to collect source-material for the history of Indo-Persian Literature. During his stay in Turkey, he visited various well-known libraries and museums and had exchange of views with eminent Turkish scholars. He was also invited to deliver a lecture at Ankara University.

In recognition of his valuable services to the cause of Iranistics and Persian Studies in India, Delhi Administration presented to him the Sahitya Kala Parishad Award in 1975. In the same year, Prof. Abidi represented India in a Seminar on Amir Lectures at Patna. Also, he attended the meeting on Literary Trends in Central Asia held at Ferdowsi University, Mashhad, as a guest of the Iranian National Commission for UNESCO, the Festival of Arts and the High Council of Culture and Arts respectively. In 1976, Prof. Abidi was appointed Director of an International Seminar on Amir Khusrow, held at New Delhi. Beside modern Persian, Professor Abidi also possessed knowledge of Arabic, Old Persian, Avestan and Pahlavi languages.

Prof. Abidi left so much unfinished material that seven years after his death, his students and other scholars are still completing and publishing his works. The Syed Amir Hasan Abidi Memorial Society itself has produced two volumes of his works since his death and more are to be published in due course.

The international conference was held on 26-27 February 2021 and over 15 international scholars were invited to present papers on different facets of Indo-Persian Literature & Culture and legacy of Professor Abidi. This link leads conference [recordings, abstracts, speaker CVs, papers and presentations](#).

WORDS WITHOUT BORDERS

Launch of New Unit of Literature from Iran

New York City, New York, March 23, 2021—The online education program of Words With-out Borders announced today the launch of [a new unit of literature from Iran](#).

“Read Iran” presents a vibrant collection of contemporary, classroom-ready essays, poems, graphic literature, and stories from Iran’s most distinguished literary voices. Each piece of literature is available on the [WWB Campus website](#) for free, along with a rich array of contextualizing multimedia resources.

“We hope these stories, poems, and essays will offer students windows on life in Iran, sparking new conversations and ideas about the world,” said WWB Campus Editor & Cur-riculum Designer Nadia Kalman. “It is our mission to expand students’ understanding of one another, of themselves, and of the value in their diversity.”

Alongside each text, educators will find teaching ideas to integrate Iranian literature into their curricula, including sample lesson plans, discussion questions, assignments, and sug-gestions for related readings. All teaching resources on the site are linked to Common Core standards.



WORDS WITHOUT BORDERS CONT'D

"Read Iran" features texts by sixteen celebrated Iranian writers, including feminist poet Forugh Farrokhzad, novelist Salar Abdooh, journalist Habibe Jafarian, cartoonist Mana Neye-stani, and novelist Amir Ahmadi Arian, who contributes an introductory essay on the con-temporary Iranian literary landscape. The literature in the unit was selected for its quali-ty, relevance to high school and college courses, and ability to engage students. "Read Iran" is organized into five thematic sections: memories, transformation, war stories, leav-ing home, and love stories.

The literature and resources in the "Read Iran" unit are available online to students, edu-cators, and libraries at no cost, as are all other materials on the WWB Campus website. For more information about how to use the program and its resources, visit [WWB-Campus.org](#) or contact WWB Campus Editor & Curriculum Designer Nadia Kalman at nadia@wordswithoutborders.org. Educators can also sign up for the [WWB Campus newsletter](#) to stay up to date on new literature and upcoming events, like the popular #LunchGlobally educators workshop series.

Winner of a 2018 Whiting Literary Magazine Prize, [Words Without Borders](#) is the premier destination for a global literary conversation. WWB seeks to expand cultural understand-ing by giving readers unparalleled access to contemporary world literature in English translation while providing a vital platform for today's international writers. Since its founding in 2003, WWB's free digital magazine has published more than 2,600 pieces of writing from 140 countries, translated from 126 languages. Our contributors include liter-ary heavyweights like Elena Ferrante, Han Kang, Olga Tokarczuk, Roberto Bolaño, and Jokha Alharthi, as well as a host of emerging voices from around the world.



FIRST AIS PRESIDENTIAL SESSION: PUBLISHING IN IRANIAN STUDIES

On 26 March 2021, AIS held its first Presidential Session. The new AIS President Naghmeh Sohrabi established these sessions to examine key topics and issues surrounding Iranian Studies today. By drawing upon the knowledge and expertise of the Association's academics, and with the help of AIS Council members, these sessions aim to offer professionalization opportunities while looking at new trends in academia. Open to all members, similar sessions shall be held throughout the year, and AIS Council sincerely hopes that they will be a welcome addition to the academic calendar.

This first presidential session was dedicated to the process, challenges, and surprises of publishing in Iranian Studies. Three speakers were invited to share their expertise: the new Editor-in-Chief of the journal *Iranian Studies*, Dr. Sussan Siavoshi; the General Editor of the Edinburgh Series in Historical Studies of Iran and the Persianate World, Dr. Stephanie Cronin, and seasoned reviewer Dr. Arang Keshavarzian. In addition to their academic positions, each speaker has ample experience in publishing and reviewing, and agreed to kindly share their experience and tips with the audience.

Dr. Sohrabi delivered introductory remarks and presented the Presidential Sessions and the day's topic, emphasising the importance of engaging and helping with the professionalization of Iranian Studies. After preliminary introductions by us (the AIS Council student representatives), each of the speakers took turns addressing some of the issues facing academic publishing.



FIRST AIS PRESIDENTIAL SESSION CONT'D

Dr. Siavoshi began by introducing her vision for the discipline's flagship journal, her initiatives to deepen the gender balance of the journal, and more representation of the social sciences. She focused on article submissions, reminding authors of the significance of presentation, coherence, and conceptual consistency. She took the opportunity to also talk about the importance of book reviews and how they can help graduate students get into the habit of publishing and creating a good first impression.

Dr. Cronin focused her talk on book publishing. She broke down some of the myths and misconceptions about publishing one's dissertation. Looking at the high number of publishers, she elaborated on the difference between commercial and university publishers, with an eye towards differences in scholarship, accessibility, and readability. She encouraged potential authors to think about the desired audience and urged them to study publishers' profiles and list of previous publications before approaching editors. By familiarizing themselves with the publisher's portfolio, potential authors would then be able to tailor articles to that specific publication and raise the chances of finding a home for their manuscripts. Dr. Cronin also talked about how to approach publishers and what to include in a proposal. She concluded her talk by reminding the audience that a thesis is an exam and that some pruning--especially contextualizing one's research to a broader audience--would be necessary before publication.

Finally, Dr. Keshavarzian shared his experience of reviewing journal articles and talked audience members through the process of blind reviewing. He emphasised on the importance of the article title and abstract, as they are the only parts of our articles the reviewers receive during the first step of the review process. For this reason, he advised us to spend time on finessing our abstracts, making sure our arguments are clearly stated and our piece is not overly filled with jargon. He then talked us through the significance of contextualization of our scholarship within our field, having humility in our writing, the politics of citation, and ways to engage with reviewer comments. Finally, he reminded us not to game the system and instead to focus on having realistic expectations as a way to avoid anxiety.

The session was then opened to questions from the audience. The exchange focused on process and expectation, with each of the speakers going into more detail. In organizing and convening this first session, we received a lot of support and would like to thank Dr. Sohrabi, Christine Rostampour, and Hamoun Hayati for helping us make this event happen.

We hope that the audience found the talk useful and that it helped to demystify some of the misconceptions around publishing. Ultimately, publishing is an important component of scholarship, and students and early career academics are encouraged to keep trying and not to be discouraged by rejection.

The next Presidential Session will focus on environmentalism in Iranian Studies, featuring the AIS Executive Committee Member, Dr. James M. Gustafson.

Leila Zonouzi & Rowena Abdul Razak
Student Representatives on the AIS Council

Edinburgh Historical Studies of Iran & the Persian World



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ZAHEDI FAMILY FELLOWSHIP

The Zahedi Family Fellowship is a twelve-week residential fellowship focusing on the new Zahedi Archive (which includes both diplomatic correspondence and collected photos) at Stanford University's Hamid and Christina Moghadam Program in Iranian Studies. During the fellowship period, the Zahedi Fellow is expected to pursue their independent research in residency and to hold a lecture, seminar or workshop on their research, organized by the Iranian Studies Program. The Zahedi fellow will have access to Stanford University Libraries and the Hoover Institution Library and Archives as well as a community of scholars at Stanford.

****Please note: due to the ongoing COVID-19 situation, the fellowship for 2020-2021 has been postponed. Please check back for updates on the new application cycle, or [join our email](#) list to receive updates.**

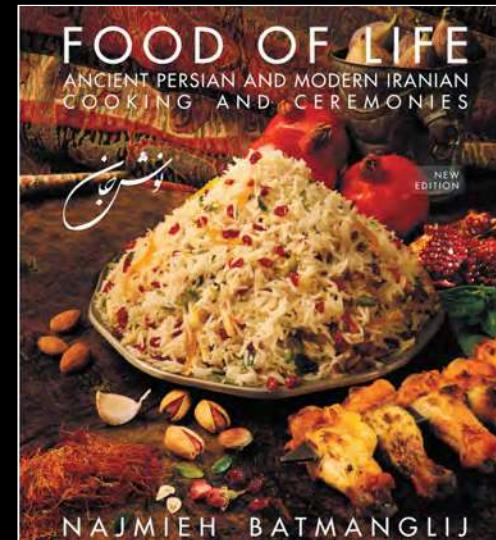
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- The fellowship is open to scholars and artists working on the modern history of Iran, particularly the period of 1941 to 1979. Preference will be given to scholars who have worked on aspects of modern Iranian foreign policy, history, and culture. The fellowship funds international travel, health insurance, and visa support, and a \$12,000 stipend for living expenses. In addition to library access, the fellow will have use of a shared workspace at the Hoover Archives where the Zahedi Collection is housed.

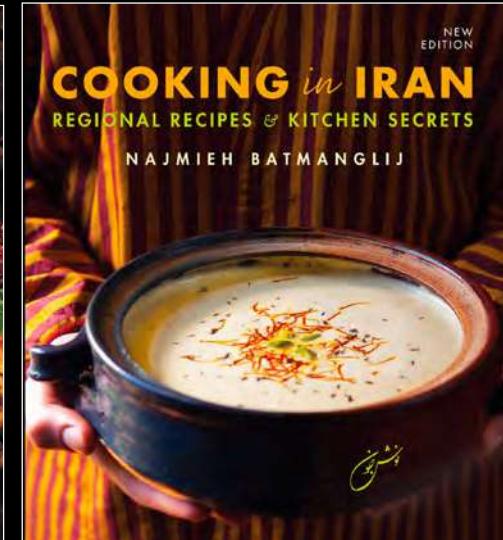
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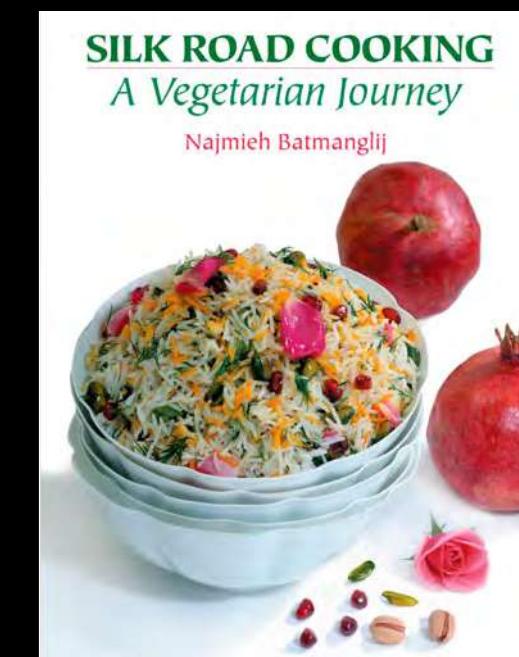
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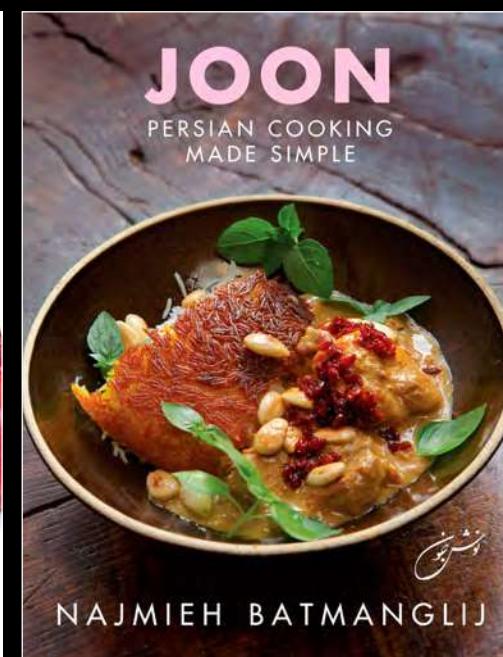
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